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CANADA
DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND RESOURCES
HON. T. A. CREECH, MINISTER; CHARLES CAMSELL, DEPUTY MINISTER

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CANADA

BULLETIN No. 90
ANTHROPOLOGICAL SERIES No. 23

THE SARCEE INDIANS
OF ALBERTA

BY
Diamond Jenness



Price, 25 cents



81437

The buffalo tent, from painting by L. G. Russell.

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MINES AND GEOLOGY BRANCH
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PREFACE

Very little has been recorded about the Saree Indians of Alberta apart from the accounts of their Dancing Societies and Sun Dance published by Dr. P. E. Goddard in the series of Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History. In the summer of 1921, therefore, the National Museum of Canada sent Mr. Jenness to their reserve near Calgary to discover what he could concerning their earlier customs and beliefs. The field-notes he gathered on that occasion provide the material for this report.

THE SARCEE INDIANS OF ALBERTA

CHAPTER I

HISTORY AND NUMBERS

European explorers of the late eighteenth century frequently mention the Sarcee Indians, although it was only during the last 10 years of that century that the tribe became regular visitors at any trading-post. Our earliest reference comes from Matthew Cocking, who speaks of five tribes of "Equestrian Indians," the Powestie-Athinuwuck or Water-fall Indians (Gros Ventres), the Mithee-Athinuwuck or Bloody Indians (Blood), the Ko-kitow-Wathesitock or Blackfooted Indians (Blackfoot proper), the Pegonow or Muddy-water Indians (Piegan), and the Sasseeuwuck or Woody Country Indians (Sarcee).¹

The erection of a trading fort at Cumberland House in 1774, followed soon afterwards by the establishment of other posts farther up North Saskatchewan River, quickly made the Sarcee well known. Thus, Umfreville wrote in 1790:

"Though this nation [the 'Susee'] have a language entirely to themselves, and which no others can learn, they are very few in number, being no more than a small tribe which was separated from the main body, and now harbour in some country about the Stony Mountain, where they keep to themselves, for not many have as yet appeared at any of the trading-houses. Those who occasionally visit us are a crafty deceiving set much given to theft and intoxication. Though their tribe is small, they cannot live in amity with their neighbours; for the last summer, a number of them fell upon an encampment of Blood Indians, whom they were at peace with, and most of the men absent, they inhumanly butchered several women and children, which it was expected would be severely revenged the first opportunity.

These Indians are lazy and improvident; they bring us very few peltries, and those all dressed Wolves skins are their chief commodity. Their women are the most ordinary of any I have seen, but they are all liberal of their favours, when a person has wherewithal to pay for them. They retain a close alliance with the Nehethawas [Cree], rather to profit by their protection, than for any mutual esteem subsisting between them. Their language is equally disagreeable and difficult to learn; it rather resembles the confused cackling of hens than the expression of human ideas; yet one of our interpreters has attained a sufficiency of it to answer the purpose of trading with them."²

It is not likely that Sir Alexander Mackenzie ever encountered the tribe, although he remarks in his "Voyages" that

"At the Southern Headwaters of the North branch dwells a tribe called Sarsces, consisting of about thirty-five tents, or one hundred and twenty men . . .

The Sarsces who are but few in number, appear from their language, to come on the contrary from the North-Westward, and are of the same people as the Rocky Mountain Indians described in my second journal, who are a tribe of the Chepewyans."³

¹Burpee, L. J.: *An Adventurer from Hudson Bay; Journal of Matthew Cocking, from York Factory to the Blackfoot country 1772-73*, edited by L. J. Burpee; Proc. and Trans. Roy. Soc., Canada, Third ser., vol. II, ser. II, pp. 110-111 (Toronto, 1908).

²Umfreville, E.: *The Present State of Hudson's Bay*, pp. 198-200 (London, 1790).

³Mackenzie, Sir Alexander: *Voyages from Montreal on the River St. Lawrence through the Continent of North America in 1789 and 1793*, pp. LXX-LXXXI (London, 1801).

Duncan McGillivray, in 1791, casually mentions visits by Sarcee Indians to his trading post at Fort George, on the North Saskatchewan,¹ but his contemporary Alexander Henry the younger describes them in some detail:

"The Sarcees are a distinct nation, and have an entirely different language from any other of the plains; it is difficult to acquire, from the many guttural sounds it contains. Their land was formerly on the N. side of the Saskatchewan, but they removed to the S. side, and now dwell commonly S. of the Beaver Hills, near the Slaves [Blackfoot], with whom they are at peace. They have the name of being a brave and warlike people, with whom neighbouring nations always appear desirous of being upon amicable terms. Their customs and manners seem to be nearly the same as those of the Cree, and their dress is the same. Their language greatly resembles that of the Chipewyans, many words being exactly the same; from this, and their apparent emigration from the N., we have reason to suppose them of that nation. They affect to despise the Slaves for their brutish and dastardly manners, and, though comparatively few in numbers, frequently set them at defiance. Formerly they killed many beavers; but, from the proximity of tribes who were indolent, they have become nearly as idle as the others. Of late years their numbers have much augmented, in the summer of 1800, when they were all in one camp, they formed 90 tents, containing about 150 men bearing arms."

"The Sarcees, who all traded at this post in the winter of 1810-11, were excellent beaver hunters while on the N. side of the Saskatchewan, but from intercourse with the Slaves have become fully as lazy and indolent. A quarrel which they had last summer with the Assiniboines has caused them to remain near the mountains for the present, the environs of the Beaver Hills are generally their station. These people have the reputation of being the bravest tribe in all the plains who dare face ten times their own numbers, and of this I have had convincing proof during my residence in this country. They are more civilized and more closely attached to us than the Slaves, and have on several occasions offered to fight the others in our defence. None of their neighbours can injure them with impunity; death is instantly the consequence. I have already mentioned their (Athapascan) origin. Their manners and customs are nearly the same as those of all the other Meadow [Plain] Indians. They are a hard people to deal with; the most arrant beggars known. A refusal makes them sullen and stubborn; for being as they term themselves our real friends, they imagine we should refuse them nothing. Most of them have a smattering of the Cree language, which they display in clamorous and discordant strains, without rule or reason. Their own language is so difficult to acquire that none of our people have ever learned it."

McGillivray's and Henry's greater contemporary, David Thompson, contributes some further information:

"The Susses are about ninety tents and may number about 650 souls. They are brave and manly, tall and well-limbed, but their faces somewhat flat, and cannot be called handsome. They speak a very guttural tongue which no one attempts to learn."

"The country of the Stone Indians and Susses are full from four to six hundred miles in the plains eastward of the Mountains and too far to look for horses; the Sarcees content themselves with rearing horses, but the Stone Indians are always in want of horses which appears to be occasioned by hard usage. They are most noted horse stealers."

From these passages it appears evident that in the eighteenth century the Sarcee controlled much the same area around the upper waters of Saskatchewan and Athabaska Rivers as they occupied in the nineteenth. Directly north of them were their kinsmen the Beaver Indians, directly south the Blackfoot proper, beyond whom lay the two other Blackfoot

¹The Journal of Duncan McGillivray, edited by A. S. Morton, Toronto, 1929.

²Coues, E. New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest; vol. II, pp. 531-2, 727.

³David Thompson's Narrative, edited by J. B. Tyrrell. The Champlain Society, Toronto, 1916, pp. 327 and 367.

tribes, the Blood and the Piegan. To the east and northeast were the Cree, who seem to have spread up Saskatchewan River during the first half of the eighteenth century, to be followed a few years later by some of the Assiniboine. To the westward, on the other side of the Rockies, dwelt the seldom-encountered Shuswap; and southeast of the Blackfoot hunted the Fall Indians or Gros Ventres, whom the Sareee frequently met at the trading-posts.

There can be no doubt that the Sareee drifted to the Saskatchewan from the northward, possibly towards the end of the seventeenth century, certainly at a period that did not long precede the penetration of the prairies by European fur-traders. Their speech still differs very little from that of the Beaver Indians who once occupied the basin of Peace River, and both tribes retain the memory of their common origin. The Sareee offer two different reasons for the separation. According to one account

"Once when faction broke out between two chiefs, all the Indians rallied behind them, thus forming two bands that separated and developed into distinct tribes, the Beaver and the Sareee."

The other relates that

"In the course of a certain winter the whole body of Indians set out to cross a river on the ice. Half of them crossed in safety, but just as the other half was about to attempt the passage the ice mysteriously broke. The two bands were afraid to rejoin later and parted company, one becoming the Sareee, the other the Beaver."¹

The early nineteenth century saw the trading-posts on the prairies increase in number, and every Indian tribe obtain an abundant supply of horses as well as a considerable number of firearms. The intermittent warfare of the previous century became intensified, and the Assiniboine and Cree Indians definitely joined forces in unceasing attacks on the three tribes of the Blackfoot, who in self-defence now formed a loose confederacy. The Gros Ventres soon retreated south of the Canada-United States boundary, but the weaker Sareee, encompassed by enemies on all sides and no longer able to stand alone or avoid taking sides in the conflict, alined themselves whole-heartedly with the Blackfoot and ranked as the fourth tribe in that confederacy. Yet we can see traces of their earlier independence not only in the statements of Umfreville and Henry just quoted, but in their still surviving traditions, which preserve the memory of several conflicts with the Blackfoot. Naturally, they attached themselves most closely to the nearest tribe of the Blackfoot, the Blackfoot proper; with the Blood and Piegan they seldom came into contact, though they still recall one fight with Blood Indians on the site of the present city of Calgary.

Several nineteenth century writers have given us glimpses of these ceaseless conflicts among the plains' tribes, in which the Sareee played their part. Sir James Douglas records in 1835 that

"A month or two ago a war party consisting of 300 Strong-wood and Beaver Hill Crees made a hostile incursion into the Blackfoot country, and accidentally

¹For other traditions concerning their separation see Chittenden, H. M., and Richardson, A. T.: *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, S.J.*; vol. III, p. 949, New York, 1905; Morice, Rev. A. G.: *Notes on the Western Dénés*; *Trans. Can. Inst.*, vol. IV, 1892-3, p. 12; Wilson, E. F.: *Report on the Sareee Indians*; *Report British Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1888, p. 243; and, for the Beaver version, Goddard, P. E.: *Anth. Papers*; *Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, vol. X, pt. IV, p. 209.

fell in with a struggling party of 20 Crees warriors who on perceiving the enemy threw themselves into a thicket of trees, and after hastily constructing a temporary barricade, boldly opened a spirited fire on the Crees who not relishing the idea of a rapid advance on their determined enemy contented themselves with maintaining a weak and desultory fire during the day. In the night the Crees, who were not very strictly guarded, escaped from their fortification, leaving 11 of their number on the field of battle; of Crees, 3 killed and 10 wounded. The Crees who escaped reached their main camp and a strong party of their friends gave pursuit to the Crees, who took up a strong position in the woods where they could not be attacked but at a manifest disadvantage; and the two parties finally separated, without any further attempt on either side.¹

Raids of one kind or another occurred almost yearly down to about 1875, so that in 1921 it was still possible to find on the Sarece reserve men and women who had taken part in them. Three old men dictated the following reminiscence:²

"When I was ten years of age I accompanied two warriors to Montana in order to steal horses from our enemies. We came upon an encampment of Dakota Indians, and by the light of the moon I stole among their tents and drove off four horses. The three of us then started out for home, but had travelled only half a day when we fell into a trap laid for us by a large band of Sioux. My companions escaped, but the Sioux surrounded me and one of them counted a coup by striking my head with a stick ornamented with an eagle feather. When they saw that I was only a boy, however, they let me proceed. A few hours later I met a little Sioux boy who also was riding all alone; and because his people had been merciful to me I let him go too, merely taking his tobacco pouch from him. Afterwards I caught up with my companions and we brought our stolen horses safely home."

"On the other side of Red Deer River four Crees once rode into camp and were immediately killed. I myself struck one of them while he was still alive. Not long afterward another small party of Crees likewise rode into our camp by mistake and met with the same fate. The Sarece children shot arrows into their dead bodies."

"About 1860 the Sarece made a truce with the Cree and established a common camp at a buffalo pound that the Cree had built. As soon as the buffalo drive ended, however, they moved away, taking with them a certain Blackfoot Indian who had temporarily joined his fortunes to theirs. Before they departed some Cree who were friendly with my father advised him to camp apart, because their people were planning to attack the Sarece; and as we moved away some one in the Cree camp did fire a shot that wounded the Blackfoot Indian in the leg. My father, with two or three kinsmen, therefore detached himself from the rest of our people and set up his camp a few miles away.

The following morning the main body of the Sarece again moved camp. The warriors and the women rode ahead; behind them travelled a score of children in the charge of an old man and in the rear of the train another band of about ten children conducted by a second old man. Suddenly the Cree rode down on them from behind, killed the two old men, carried off the children, and attacked the warriors and the women as they were pitching their tents. Both sides suffered many casualties, the Sarece far more than the Cree. Finally night put an end to the battle and the Sarece escaped in the darkness."

"About 1862, when the Sarece were travelling near Fort Vermilion, a dense fog arrested their progress and caused them to pitch their tents under a hill not far from a lake. An old man then left the camp to pursue a buffalo which he overtook after many miles and killed. The Sarece noticed his absence at their dance that

¹Private Papers of Sir James Douglas, 1st ser., ser. C, No. 12, Bancroft Collection, Pacific Coast MSS., University of California.

²See also pp. 2 et seq.

coming, and as soon as it was daylight they sent out a few warriors and women to look for him. I wanted to accompany the party, but my father said that I was too young and ordered me back to the camp.

A few hours later we heard the sound of firing, and thought that our search party had discovered a herd of buffalo. What really happened was that one of that party, riding ahead of the rest, approached a man on the slope of a hill under the impression that he was the missing hunter. When he discovered that it was a Cree Indian, he turned his horse and galloped back to warn his companions, but the horse caught its foot in a badger hole and fell. Before the man had time to flee two Cree rode down on him, and, though he shot one of them, he himself was shot and killed by the other. Then a large force of Cree suddenly appeared on the hill top and galloped down on the Sarcee, whose horses were already tired from the day's journey. As they fled the horse my uncle was riding became utterly exhausted, and my father offered to take him on his own horse. At first my uncle refused, saying that my father had a large family to support and should try to save himself; but in the end, he mounted behind him and let his own horse go. The Cree overtook them, nevertheless, and though my father killed one man and wounded another, both he and my uncle were killed, along with five other Sarcee who fought beside them. The remainder reached within sight of our camp before they were surrounded. A hand-to-hand mêlée ensued, in which the women fought as desperately as the men; but hardly one of the party succeeded in reaching the tents.

Meanwhile some of us were piling poles, travois, bags and other things around the tents to form a barricade, while others dug holes in the ground for cover. I was hurried away with a party that carried two large tents to the shore of the lake where we should be protected in the rear. There our enemies soon surrounded us, not only Cree, but Indians of three other tribes allied with them, some armed with guns, the majority with bows and arrows. The noise of their guns was deafening, and their arrows pattered on the water like rain. Our women and children huddled inside the tents, holding dried skins over their heads to ward off the arrows; and behind the tents stood the men, led by three distinguished warriors, one on each flank and one in the middle. Whenever the enemy approached too near one or more men would charge them. Several times a man failed to return, and a relative would then rush out to look for him; but generally the relative too was shot the moment he left his cover.

One young man was particularly heroic. He drove back the enemy repeatedly until at last an arrow struck him in the throat. He jerked it out and rushed forward again, but fell to the ground dead. Then his father rushed forward, shot two Cree who were trying to dispossess his son, seized their guns and ran back toward the tents again. A bullet struck his leg and he fell; but as he lay on the ground betwixt friends and foes, both of whom were striving to reach him, he calmly reloaded his gun and shot a Cree who was charging down. Two of his relatives succeeded at last in dragging him back to shelter, still clasping the two guns that he had captured. Ever afterwards this man bore the honorable title "Two Guns."

I was lying inside one of the tents, which kept shaking and blowing up at the bottom so that I could see what was happening. At one time I saw two of our men lying outside, both shot in the legs; at another a Cree and a Sarcee grappling with each other's guns. An old woman who was lying near me, shielding her grandchild, leaped up to stretch a skin over their heads when a bullet suddenly struck her brass bracelet, pierced her wrist, and tore out her grandchild's eye. In the height of one assault the wife of Bull-Head, one of our leaders, peered out of our tent and, seeing three Cree trying to enter the other tent, caught up an axe, cleft the skulls of all three from behind, and carried back one of their guns.

Throughout most of the battle I did not see our three leaders, but near the end, when many of the enemy had exhausted their bullets and some of them were loading their guns with pieces of steel wire, I heard them singing their medicine songs and challenging each other to feats of bravery. Suddenly all three of them charged out and drove the Cree back. As they were racing in again, the man who had been guarding the middle of the camp stopped to pick up a wounded friend. A bullet struck his leg, but he hobbled on until a second bullet struck his other leg and he fell just outside our tent. His two co-leaders kept up their charges until the second one was wounded and only the third, Bull-Head, remained to organize the defense.

This warrior called to the survivors, just before sunset: 'Don't skulk there round the tents. Charge the enemy with me.' Every man who could still fight rushed to the attack and drove the Cree back. The enemy then retreated, being afraid, apparently, of Bull-Head's great medicine-power, because he had killed more men with his tomahawk and Hudson Bay sword than all the rest of the Sarcee combined.

The Cree and their allies suffered heavily in this battle, but the Sarcee lost at least twenty families, including women and children. Never again did they recover their earlier strength."

"My grandfather and my mother belonged to the Sioux¹ nation, but my father was a Sarcee and I myself was born among the Sarcee. One day my father went out to hunt buffalo and did not return to our camp for two days, for he had discovered that the Cree were lying in wait to intercept him. Not knowing this, however, our people sent out a search party, which ran into our enemies and was driven back to our camp. As often as the Cree overtook a man, woman or child they pulled their victim off his horse and killed him. In their first charge they reached the middle of our camp and drove us into and behind our tents. Every one of our horses was killed, and a pond in the centre of the camp became red with blood, for the arrows pattered on the water like rain and the smoke of the guns almost blotted out the view. One Cree leaped into a tent filled with women and was felled with an axe. The battle raged all day, but toward evening some Blackfoot came to our aid and we drove our enemies off. During their retreat I followed four of our warriors, and when they surrounded and killed one of the foe, I shot all his arrows into his corpse. The Cree and their allies suffered heavily, not only during the battle, but afterwards on their retreat, when they had to leave many of their wounded to die on the trail. Our own losses were even heavier, for we filled two tents with the bodies of our dead."

"In the winter of 1869 a kinsman of mine, Crow-chief, with his wife, another man, and a boy, left our camp to hunt for buffalo, and had just killed an animal when they were attacked by a party of Cree. The other man fled precipitately and was never heard of again, probably because he froze to death, but Crow-chief, his wife and the boy tried to regain our camp. His wife's pony was so slow, however, and the Cree were gaining on them so rapidly, that Crow-chief turned aside and hid in some brush, leaving his wife and the boy to be captured. The Cree killed the boy and surrounded the brush in which he was hiding, but, doubling on his tracks, he galloped past them and reached our camp. That night the enemy stole all our horses; and they waylaid and killed an old man whom we sent out the next morning to procure others. Then, late in the afternoon, they attacked us in our camp; but with the help of some Blackfoot Indians we killed two of them and drove the rest off. Two years later some missionary sisters at Lake St. Anne rescued Mrs. Crow-chief from the Cree and restored her to her husband."²

Always a small tribe, apparently, the Sarcee suffered throughout their history not only from these intertribal wars, but from all the epidemics of smallpox and other diseases that ravaged the other plains' Indians. Estimates of their earlier population vary. Mackenzie gave them "about 35 tents or one hundred and twenty men,"³ whereas Thompson and Henry, as we have just seen, estimated ninety tents, 150 warriors, and about 650 souls. A quarter of a century later Sir John Franklin raised the number of tents to one hundred,⁴ and the same figure appears in the Private Papers of Sir James Douglas which date from the same period.⁵ A smallpox epidemic in 1836, and an epidemic of scarlet fever in 1856, both decimated them; and when their strength had been still further reduced by at least

¹The Sarcee commonly applied the name Sioux to the Gros Ventre.

²What probably was the same incident is recorded in Hughes, Katherine. *Lather Lacombe, the Black-Robe Voyageur*, pp. 139, 157-160 (New York, 1911). The date given there, however, is 1867.

³Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, p. LXX.

⁴Franklin, J. *Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea*; vol. 1, p. 170 (London, 1824).

⁵Private Papers of Sir James Douglas, 1st ser., ser. C, No. 12, Bancroft Collection of Pacific Coast MSS., University of California (copy in the Dominion Archives, Ottawa).

one crushing defeat at the hands of the Cree, and by the starvation that attended the diminution of the buffalo herds, they were afflicted by a second epidemic of smallpox that crippled them completely. In his brief account of the tribe in 1885 Hale states

"The adopted tribe, the Sarcées, have greatly diminished in numbers through the ravages of the smallpox. In 1870 this disease raged among them with great virulence. They were then residing on the American side in Montana. Mr. McLean writes 'An eye-witness told me that at the Maria's River, in Montana, there stood fully 100 lodges, and not one containing less than ten bodies.' His estimate of dead Sarcées was 1,500. This tribe, now numbering less than 500 souls, have their Reserve near Calgary."

PLATE 11



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Old Knife inside his tipi.

Although in this passage Hale's informant has probably confounded the Sarcée with some other tribe, his description of the desolation the epidemic produced is in no way exaggerated, being fully confirmed by contemporary missionaries. Even in 1921 the Sarcée were still dating events from 1870, and an old man named Many Wounds retained a vivid memory of their sufferings in that year.

When I was ten years old I killed my first buffalo, a young calf, with a bow and arrow, and a few weeks later I killed a full-grown animal in a pound. In the late summer of this year, when the berries had begun to ripen and we had encamped near the Blackfoot just north of the Red Deer River, smallpox broke out among us. It attacked the Indians in different ways. Some became red all over, but their skin did not break out into open sores; others were covered with red sores oozing pus.

¹Hale, Horatio. Report on the Blackfoot Tribes. Rept. British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1885, pp. 698-9.

Some were attacked in the throat; their tongues swelled and they suffocated. Others felt pain in the spine and died in one night. Father Lacombe visited us for a time and vaccinated a few individuals; but there were no medicines that could cure us. We broke up camp and moved south, abandoning the dead and the dying in their tents or dropping them beside the trail. Gradually the plague mitigated, but not until it had wiped out nearly 200 families. My father, my mother, two brothers and a sister all died, so that I had to live in the tent of a married sister."

In 1877, along with the Blackfoot and the Alberta Assiniboiné, the Sarece signed a treaty resigning their hunting-grounds to the Dominion Government on certain conditions, one being that each member of the tribe should receive an annual gratuity of \$5. Two years later pay-sheets record the payment of this annuity to 672 persons, organized in five bands, as follows: Big Plume's band 287; Bull-Head's 134; Painted Otter's 43; Little Drum's 145; and Many Horses' 63. These bands, however, probably included Indians of other tribes, for the pay-sheet of the following year records only 396 persons, the pay-sheet for 1881 (the first year in which the annuity was distributed on the present Sarece reserve near Calgary) 485 or 458,¹ and the pay-sheets for succeeding years numbers that are still smaller. The Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico (art. Sarece) states, without giving its authority, that "in 1897 two divisions [of the Sarece] were reported, one at Calgary and the other near Battleford"; but since nothing further seems to be known of the Battleford Sarece, they perhaps comprised merely two or three families that merged with the local Assiniboiné and Cree, just as by 1921 some Blackfoot and Cree families had merged with the main body of the Sarece on the reserve near Calgary. We may safely presume that at the time they resigned their territory and submitted to confinement, i.e. in 1880, the Sarece numbered between 400 and 450. From 1880 until 1920 (and perhaps later), they declined steadily, not because certain families wandered away from the reserve (for others moved in to counterbalance the loss²), but because of an exceedingly high death-rate occasioned by tuberculosis and other causes.³ The statistics of the births and deaths on the reserve from 1891 to 1901 are as follows:

Year	Births	Deaths
1891	14	16 (7 consumption)
1892	10	14 (8 grippe, 2 consumption)
1893	14	15 (4 consumption)
1894	10	11 (2 lung disease, 3 consumption)
1895	8	18 (6 consumption)
1896	13	15 (1 consumption)
1897	12	18 (14 consumption)
1898	9	12 (7 consumption)
1899	8	19 (12 consumption)
1900	5	10 (4 consumption)
1901	4	6 (3 consumption)

¹Papers on the Sarece reserve contained two records for this year that gave different totals.

²Between 1897 and 1910, 46 Indians moved into the reserve and 21 moved out of it.

³Thus Many Wounds, whose description of the smallpox has just been quoted, had six children, only one of whom reached maturity.

In 1924 the reserve sheltered 160 Indians, all commonly considered Sarece, though an uncertain proportion were originally Cree and Blackfoot. Even Assiniboine and other elements have been present, seeing that the Pax Britannica and the reservation system established after 1880 seem to have produced no greater fusion of the plains' tribes than had been going on for centuries. We know from the narratives of the early explorers that women taken in intertribal raids commonly married their captors, and that even warriors frequently changed their allegiance.¹ The tribes have, therefore, intermingled their blood from time immemorial, and it is not surprising that in physical appearance the Sarece present no features that would distinguish them from other plains' Indians. One can place little confidence in such statements as that the Sarece "are not so fine or tall a race as the Blackfeet," or that "they are of a lower order and inferior mentality."² On the contrary, in physique, mentality, dress, and customs they seem hardly distinguishable from the Blackfoot, although they have preserved their Athapaskan tongue almost unchanged.

¹Thus David Thompson met a family of Cree origin that had gained a high place among the Blackfoot.

²Wilson, E. F.: Report on the Sarece Indians; Rept. British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1888, 246, 248.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Like other plains' Indians, the Sareee were a democratic people who did not countenance hereditary distinctions of caste or rank. They were divided into several bands, each containing a number of closely related families that usually hunted in company, and always camped together as a unit when the tribe united, unless it happened to be holding a special celebration such as a Sun Dance. Girls belonged to their mothers' bands, boys above the age of nine or ten to their fathers', though they still retained close contact with their mothers' kin; for since the bands were very small and freely intermarried there was no outward distinction between their members; a family could temporarily hunt or travel with another band at will, and even change its allegiance permanently. Alien families who joined the tribe attached themselves, by permission, to one or other band and were soon completely absorbed by intermarriage; at least, such was the custom in the late nineteenth century, probably also in earlier times. The bands indeed, seem to have been very fluid, constant neither in number nor composition; they could arise quite naturally whenever a man had several sons, and by his success in hunting or warfare drew into his orbit one or more other families. Probably several such bands were destroyed during the hostilities and epidemics of the nineteenth century, and new ones arose to take their places. In 1921, long after they had lost their significance, the Sareee still grouped themselves into five bands, which they generally named after the outstanding family in each.

- (1) Blood, *Kloorangit* or Big Plume's band.

This comprised the families of Yellow-Lodge, Dick Knight, Bull Collar, Peter Big Plume, Joe Big Plume, Jack Big Plume, and a few women who had married into the Cree and Blackfoot tribes and were living on other reserves. Most of the families were of mixed Sareee and Blood descent whence the name of the band.

- (2) Broad Grass, Tents Cut Down, or Crow-Child's band.

It comprised the families of Crow-Child, Bertie Crow-Child, Sleigh, Many Wounds, and Peter Many Wounds. Most of them were of mixed Cree and Sareee descent, and the name Broad Grass recalls that the Cree element came from the north where the grass is thick and long.

- (3) People who hold aloof (*untsisimay*) or Crow-Chief's band.

It comprised the families of Charlie Crow-Chief, Tony, Wolf, Otter, Oscar Otter, Pat Grasshopper (senior and junior), and Bob Left Hand. Most of the members were pure Sareee.

- (4) Uterus or Old Sareee's band.

It comprised the families of Old Sareee, One-Spotted, David, One-Spotted, Fox Tail, Two Young Men, Tom Heaven-Fire, Two Guns, Crow-Collar, George Big-Crow, Dick Starlight, Jim Starlight, Sareee Woman, Young Bull-Head, Dodging a Horse, and Anthony Dodging a Horse. Many of them were mixed Sareee and Blackfoot.

- (5) Young Buffalo Robe or Many Horses' band, occasionally called also "Those who keep together."

It comprised the families of Tom Many Horses, Big Knife, Running in the Middle, Dog, and John Waters. Most of the members considered themselves pure Sareee.

Each band had its leader, who was not elected, but recognized by common consent because of his prestige. Although he possessed no formal authority, and had no means of enforcing his wishes except by popular support, his advice and instructions were rarely disobeyed. Similarly, there was no elected chief for the entire tribe, but always one or more band leaders who through their greater influence could generally sway the people to their views and, therefore, tacitly ranked as chiefs. The Indians discussed all matters of importance at informal councils composed of the band-leaders, the older and more experienced men, and noted warriors. At such councils each man's opinion weighed theoretically as much as any other's, but the views of the more influential naturally prevailed. The rank and file then accepted without question the decisions of the council, any men who dissented were free to move away, and, if they wished, to dissociate themselves altogether from the tribe.

Quite separate from the bands, and indeed cutting right across them, were five societies or clubs, to one or more of which every male Sarece belonged at some time or other in his career. Each society held an annual 4-day dance attended by every member of the tribe, and during those 4 days the leader of the society enjoyed complete control of the camp and all its activities. One society, the Painted Red or *tasyitna*, served also as a police force at every Sun Dance festival. Throughout all the rest of the year, however, the societies were dormant, and their members-scattered among the bands. Although their leaders naturally participated in every informal council called by the tribal and band leaders, their authority was then no greater than that of other influential men within the tribe.

Because the Sarece lived entirely by hunting, their movements conformed very closely to those of their principal game animal, the buffalo. Comparatively few herds of buffalo remained about the headwaters of Saskatchewan River during the winter months; most of them migrated south in the autumn, and did not return until the spring. During the greater part of the year, therefore, the Sarece moved about in small groups, generally subdivisions of their bands consisting of from one to a dozen families. These groups rarely travelled more than a day's journey apart through fear of the Cree and other enemies; and they frequently united, either in summer or in winter, to organize a buffalo drive for their common benefit. Toward the end of summer, when the berries were ripe, they always amalgamated that they might celebrate together the dances of their "societies" (See page 41), and in certain years the festival of the Sun Dance.

One other factor influenced their movements, the necessity for abundant fuel and shelter during the winter months. In summer they could gather on the open prairies all the low brush and buffalo dung they required to cook their food, but in winter these were covered beneath the snow. At that season, therefore, they retreated to the edge of the woods, and made only such forays out into the open plains as were necessary to replenish their supply of meat.

During the early nineteenth century, then, their movements in a normal year followed this general pattern:

Winter: groups of several families camped along the edge of the woods at distances of 1 or 2 days' journey apart.

Early spring (when buffalo began to come north): these groups moved out on to the open prairies.

Summer (when many buffalo herds roamed the plains): numerous small parties of Indians, even single families, hunted separately a few miles apart. Once or occasionally twice in the season the entire tribe united to drive the herds of buffalo into a pound or to force them over a cliff. This was the usual season for visiting the trading-posts, though in some years visits were made in winter.

August: the tribe united for the society dances and the Sun Dance.

September: the tribe dispersed again into groups, which gradually retreated to the edge of the woods. This was the favourite season, also, for raids on neighbouring tribes.

An important member of the tribe, the owner of the Beaver Bundle (See page 77), kept an official tally of the months with sticks. How he reconciled his lunar calendar with the solar year the present-day Indians could not remember; and their list of "moons," *tea'taya*, contains only eleven names, not twelve.

January-February : *halit-ca*: "old man moon."

February-March : *mitsi di-kaiya*: "moon white," i.e., white-headed eagle moon.

March-April : *lei-z*: "ducks."

April-May : *tacyatei*: "frogs."

May-June : *eyasa*: "hatching time."

June-July : *iteayana dat-i*: "birds come out of nest."

July-August : *am-wa* or *am-wa ac'casqut-i*: "the mid-year without snow."

August-September : *tecatinitlas*: "ripening berries."

September-October : *akas-i nateinitla*: "leaves falling."

October-November : *ikotite*: "ice forming," or *teaz-i tayanit-a*: "elk sits down in the creek."

November-December : *saska ac'casqut-i*: "mid-year with snow."

The united tribe camped on the open prairies presented a very picturesque sight. The large, conical tipis of buffalo hide, erected on four-pole foundations and many decorated with pictures of their owners' visions, stood in a great circle from whose centre rose the tipi of the leading chief (or two tipis, if there were two chiefs of equal standing).² Sometimes the circle was complete, sometimes a gap was left towards the east. In and out of the tipis moved the women, busily engaged in preparing meat, tanning hides, and in other occupations that fell to the lot of their sex. The warriors, for the most part, lolled in their tents or on the grass outside, ready to spring into action at the slightest warning from the two or three mounted men who guarded the horses grazing peacefully on the outskirts, or kept a lookout from the neighbouring hill-tops.

¹This term is now used for Christmas.

²Except during the Sun Dance, when the woman whose vow occasioned the festival set up her own tent in the centre (See p. 51).

In the arrangement of such a camp the Indians followed certain definite rules. The man who first reached the site chose a suitable location for his tent; later arrivals then adopted his tent as the starting point for their circle and followed its circumference sunwise. The women erected the tents unaided, for no man would demean himself by lending his aid;¹ and they generally turned the doorways toward the east, because the prevailing winds were north and south. The bands kept together, each occupying a certain section of the circle, irrespective of what band occupied the next; and within each section the individual families camped in any order, except that a man on no account occupied a site next to his mother-in-law. Medicine-men enjoyed the privilege of camping at any place around the circumference, but remained as a rule with their bands.

The exact date at which the Saree adopted this circular arrangement for their summer camp we do not know, but almost certainly about the same time as the Blackfoot. Now in 1755, when Hendry visited the prairies, the Blackfoot still pitched their tents in two parallel lines,² an arrangement that was very satisfactory for repelling slow infantry attacks, but not the sudden raids of mobile horsemen. In Hendry's time, however, horses were still scarce on the Canadian prairies, and they did not become common until the first quarter of the nineteenth century. That, presumably, was the period when the institution of the camp circle took root, although it had existed long before on the prairies of the United States. Among the Saree it functioned only in summer; in winter, when they lived on the edge of the forests, they pitched their tents in any order.

If the Saree ever erected lodges of brush like their kinsmen in the Mackenzie River basin, their descendants today retain no memory of them; and it was not until after their confinement to a reserve that they built log houses for the winter months. Their one and only home was the familiar tipi, the conical tent made by wrapping from 12 to 16 tanned buffalo hides, stitched together, around a framework of from 14 to 24 poles. When the herds of buffalo disappeared their hides were replaced by canvas, but the shape remained essentially the same. The overlapping edges of the cover were laced together below the peak, leaving a small entrance slit at the bottom that could be closed with a rectangular curtain of hide or cloth. The inside diameter measured generally about 14 feet; and the furniture was meagre, as befitted a people constantly on the move. In the centre was an open fireplace from which the smoke curled upward to the two adjustable cowls near the peak; around the sides the sleeping places, each with the roll of blankets or skins, and back-rest of willow-twigs supported against a tripod, that one may still see on most of the prairie reserves. Honoured guests slept at the back opposite the door—a place reserved also for any unmarried son old enough to go on the war-path—while the owner and his wife slept on one side or the other, usually on the south. The least honourable position was among the storage near the door, where the mother and her daughters usually sat whenever distinguished male visitors entered the tent. Here lay the meat and the leather water-buckets, the woman's stone

¹Today, on the reserve, men frequently help their wives to set up the poles, and to draw around them the canvas that has replaced the old cover of buffalo hide.

²Hendry, Anthony: *The Journal of York Factory to the Blackfoot Country, 1754-1755*, edited by L. J. Burpee: *Proc. and Trans. Roy. Soc., Canada, Third ser., vol. I, sec. II, Toronto, 1907*, p. 337.

ax with which she broke dead limbs for fuel, scrapers and fleshers for dressing hides,¹ stone mauls, horn ladles, perhaps, too, the clay pot that preceded cooking vessels of iron.² The hide bags or "partlèches" with spare clothing, on the other hand, and the women's sewing equipment, generally lay between the bed-rolls and the wall of the tent; while the man's bow and arrows, his shield, club, and knife, and the bags containing his paints and medicines, hung from the tripod at the head of his bed.

The scouts guarding these tipis from the hill-tops scanned the horizon for two objects, human enemies and buffalo; for to the Sarece, as to other plains' Indians, the buffalo was the staff of life. From its flesh came nearly all their food; from its hide they obtained covers for their tents, shields, and saddles, bags to hold their pemmican and clothing, buckets for carrying and vessels for boiling water, bedding, even certain parts of their clothing; and from its bones they fashioned various tools and weapons. The pursuit of the buffalo, therefore, was the principal occupation of every man and youth in the community; and as failure in the hunt spelled starvation and death, it was generally conducted as a co-operative enterprise, particularly in the days before the Indians obtained abundant horses and firearms. On a few occasions during the year (mainly in midsummer, when the herds were very numerous) an individual hunter might conceal his head beneath a coyote skin, creep up within range, and shoot down a single animal with his arrow; but the percentage of buffalo killed in this way was extremely low. The great majority were destroyed by the united efforts of a number of men, and often of the entire tribe.

On the present-day Sarece reserve near Calgary is a narrow, 40-foot deep gulch with precipitous sides, one side indeed so precipitous as to be almost perpendicular. A man approaching it on horseback receives no warning of its presence, even in broad daylight, until he has almost ridden over the edge. This was only one of several places where the Sarece united to surround the buffalo and stampede them over the cliffs, thereby destroying a whole herd within a few minutes; yet from this gulch alone they collected in 1918 and 1919 several tons of bones, which they sold for fertilizer.

Where nature had provided no suitable cliff the Indians erected corrals or pounds into which they drove the buffalo, there to be shot down from the barriers. The shape of the early Sarece pound is not known. The present-day Indians remember only those they built in the latter half of the nineteenth century, which were rectangular enclosures of logs lashed together with rawhide and raised to as great a height as possible. One

¹ An old Sarece woman thus described her method of dressing buffalo hides: "After scraping off the meat and fatty tissue with an adze-shaped tool bladed with a section of an old gun barrel (her mother had used a stone), she punched holes around the edges of the skin and pegged it out to dry. Then she removed the hair with a fleshing tool of elk's leg-bone serrated along its chisel-shaped edge, and scraped the whole hide perfectly smooth. Next she rubbed it with the fat, liver, or brains of the buffalo, and after exposing it to the sun or a fire for a day or two to let the fat soak in, steeped the hide in water for another day. Finally she rinsed it, and pulled it vigorously backwards and forwards over a cord of snow. This final treatment left the skin dry and soft."

² The Sarece state that they abandoned their clay pots about the time they obtained horses. This seems very probable, for we know from Cocking's Journal that the Blackfoot were still making and using pots in 1772.

³ An Adventurer from Hudson Bay. Journal of Matthew Cocking from York Factory to the Blackfoot country, 1772-73, edited by I. J. Burpee, Proc. and Trans. of the Royal Society, Canada, vol. II, 1908, pp. 109, 111. No one seems to have described the actual process of manufacture. An old Sarece said that the women kneaded and nollowed out the pot by hand, dried it in the sun, then laid it with its mouth to a fire where the smoke baked it and prevented it from cracking. In the nineteenth century all the plains' tribes, and even some of the Chipewyan Indians, often boiled their meat in a hide, or in the paunch of the buffalo, propped into the shape of a bag by a peg under each corner. Naturally, they could not place this vessel over a fire, but heated the water with hot stones.



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A. Woman drying meat.



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B. Woman scraping a skin.

long side of the rectangle was banked with earth on its outer face, so that it presented a gentle slope to approaching buffalo but terminated at the pound in a sheer drop. To prevent the herd from breaking away to either side a fence of logs extended outward for a short distance from each of the two front corners, and these fences were prolonged for half a mile or more by two gradually diverging lines of men, women, and children, stationed behind willows or blankets. Down this laneway one or two horsemen guided the buffalo; the sentinels then closed in behind them.

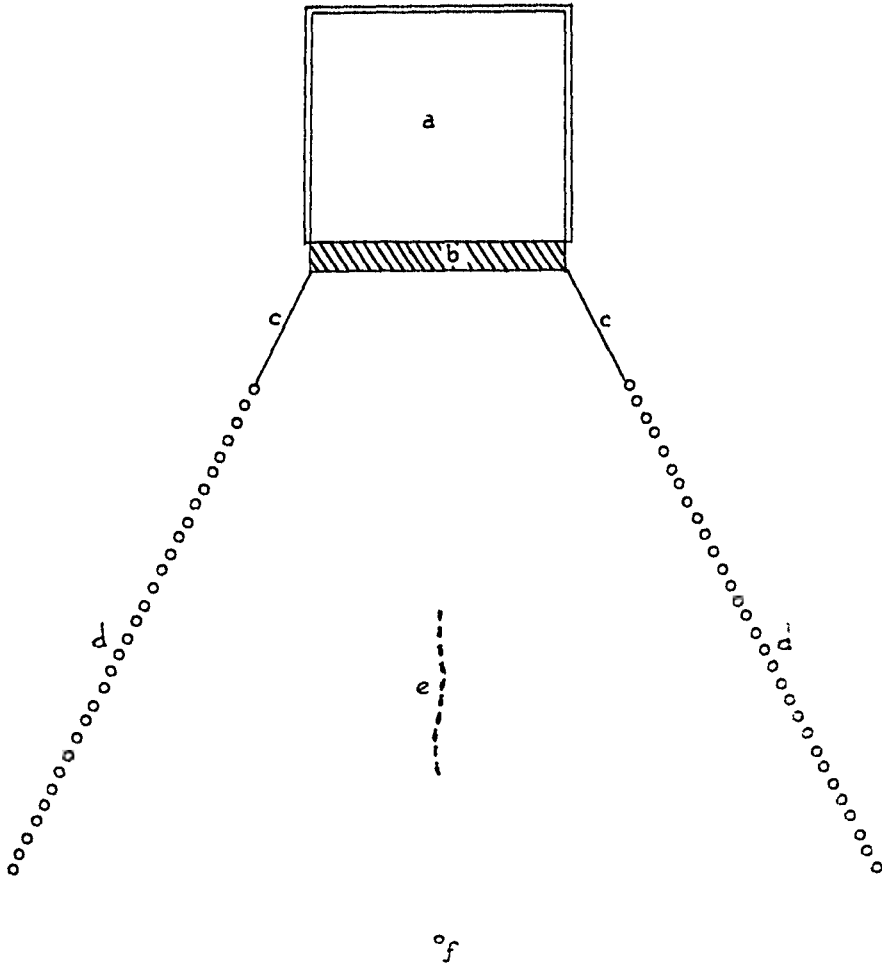


Figure 1. Sketch plan of a buffalo pound: (a) corral of notched rails, built as high as possible; the logs were often lashed together with rawhide; (b) an embankment consisting of a railed fence with earth heaped against the outside, giving an easy incline to the approaching buffaloes, but leaving a sheer drop into the corral; (c,c) lines of logs resting on the ground at one end, at the other in the fork of a post; (d,d) men and women behind willows or blankets to guide the buffaloes; (e) buffaloes; (f) man on foot or horseback driving them.

and all united with wild yells to drive the terrified animals pell-mell into the trap.

The Sareee retained a clear recollection of the erection of these pounds during the summer months, but not during the winter. At that season, they said, they hunted in small groups, each consisting, until horses became plentiful, of several footmen under a leader on horseback. The leader generally selected one man, mounted, if possible, on a spare horse, to search out the buffalo. He himself then pursued and shot down the animals; and his followers butchered the meat, carried it back to camp, and divided it equally among the different families. Theoretically the leader could retain all the hides, though in practice he nearly always shared them also. If, however, he needed a new tent for himself, he could call on the wives of his followers to tan the necessary hides in payment for the meat they had received.

CHAPTER III

THE CYCLE OF SARCEE LIFE

Nameless, but generally not without honour, the Sarece child entered the world of the living. To usher it in, the parents chose some honest warm-hearted woman who would carefully take hold of its right hand when it emerged from its mother's womb- not the left hand, lest it be left-handed ever after- and pray with sincerity, "May the kindness and charity I feel toward others animate you also." Then when she had severed the cord, bound the stump with sinew, washed the babe and wrapped it in soft furs, an attendant equally warm-hearted laid it in its moss bag and repeated the same prayer, confident that in some mystic manner it would work out its fulfilment. For at least a day, while the mother regained her strength, this attendant watched over the sleeping infant, keeping it near the warm fire and turning it over at intervals from one side to the other.

If the new-born child was a girl, and the midwife or her assistant a medicine-woman, the father might ask her to select and confer a name immediately. More often, however, apparently, if the child were male, he delayed a week or two, then approached some old medicine-man or successful warrior, offering in payment a horse or its equivalent. The old man generally pondered for a night in his tent,¹ seeking a name from some brave deed in his career, from some vision in earlier life, or, most prized of all, one suggested by a new vision specially vouchsafed to him for this occasion. Whatever the name, it should be new, or at least not borne by any living person, though it might have belonged to one long dead. As soon as the old man was ready he notified the father, and, in the presence of the parents, took the infant in his arms, announced its name and invoked the "Maker's" (Great Spirit's) blessing.

The child, whether boy or girl, remained inseparable from its mother until it attained the age of 9 or 10. She attended to its needs in the camp, and, whenever the camp was moved, carried it on her back, in her travois, or on her own horse before or behind her, if it was unable to walk or ride alone. Its ears were pierced by an old woman during this period, but without the ceremony that marked the similar operation among the Blackfoot.² Girls younger than 5 or 6, and boys up to the age of 9 or 10, went freely naked, but older children wore clothes patterned after those of their parents. Their exact shapes in earlier times we do not know; in the second half of the nineteenth century they consisted of moccasins and leggings for both sexes (girls' leggings came only to the knees, boys' to the thighs), a sleeved dress for girls that overlapped the leggings, and for boys a breech-cloth and a short shirt, also sleeved. As a rule, all these

¹ There was no sweet-house ceremony, as among the Blackfoot (See Wissler, C. "The Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians," *Anth. Papers, Am. Mus. of Nat. Hist.*, vol. VII, p. 16 (1912)).

² Cf. Wissler, C. "Blackfoot Social Life," *Anth. Papers, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, vol. III, p. 30.

garments were made of elk or deer skin except the moccasins, for which the heavier buffalo hide was more suitable. In winter children and adults alike added robes of buffalo hide, and often wore caps made from the furs of smaller mammals such as the wolf and the antelope.

At the age of 9 or 10 the boy's life changed. Hitherto he had remained at his mother's side, and counted as a member of her band. Now his father undertook his education, and he was enrolled in his father's band. In later life he could revert, if he wished, to his mother's band, or attach himself to any other, but during the years of his adolescence his status was determined for him.

The training imposed on him was fairly rigorous. His father taught him to ride and drive horses, made him a bow and arrows, and even provided him with a set of gambling sticks, though not without admonishing him never to lapse into an inveterate gambler. On a horse of his own he accompanied his father to the buffalo-hunt, and helped to carry home the meat. His father supervised his dress, sometimes even to the extent of himself making or purchasing the lad's clothes; and other men in the community took an active interest in his upbringing. Every camp selected one old man, often the leader of a society, to supervise the young boys and to impress on them the tribal ethics—strict honesty within the tribe, obedience to parents, respect for the aged and blind, and reverence for the medicine-bundles and for everything pertaining to religion. It was he who mustered the boys each morning to bathe in the river, summer and winter alike—unless the ice was too thick to break—in which case he made them roll naked in the snow; any youth who was slow or recalcitrant he might chastise with thorns. Occasionally, when the tribe moved camp, the same old man held the boys back for 3 or 4 hours, then, himself mounted on a horse, made them race on foot to the new camp 10 or 15 miles away, that they might be untiring and swift-footed on the war-path; the youths who excelled in these races generally became scouts a year or two later.

Few taboos restricted their liberty, and such as there were related mainly to food. Both boys and girls had to abstain from eating certain parts of the buffalo. On no account might they touch any part of an unborn buffalo calf.

Only the exceptional lad accompanied a war-party before he reached the age of 14 or 15. Its leader then bestowed on him temporarily the name of his grandmother (father's mother), but urged him to attempt some brave deed that would justify his receiving a name previously borne by an uncle or other near relative. When the party returned from the raid a crowd immediately gathered around the boy and asked him his name. Should he still bear his grandmother's name they laughed at him; but the old woman herself would comfort him, saying "So they have given you my name. Well, you need not be ashamed of it, for I was a capable woman in my day." Naturally, however, the lad lost no opportunity of distinguishing himself on the next war-party. The horse or other trophy he then captured he presented to some male relative who had taken special interest in his welfare; and often this relative took the place of the father in enrolling the lad, at his own expense, into the "Mosquito" society (See page 42).

Success on the war-path, a new and honourable name, and membership in the Mosquito society, gave the lad a new status. His father procured him finely ornamented clothes made from the furs of the mountain lion, the lynx, or the otter, gave him his best horses, and decorated the special horse that he rode whenever the tribe moved camp. A beaded collar encircled this horse's neck, a beaded stick and strips of weasel fur dangled from its halter, the saddle and the buffalo-hide "saddle-cloth" both carried beadwork, and the whip that the lad brandished fitted into a highly polished handle of elk horn adorned with strips of otter or weasel fur. Some youths carried bright-coloured fans, others war-clubs, or gleaming two-edged daggers slung from the arm in beaded leather sheaths. Some again wore fur bonnets with two upstanding buffalo horns, which for ostentation they often tied to their horses' heads. Thus arrayed¹ they pranced to one side of the cortège as it moved over the prairies, jesting with one another under the ogling eyes of the marriageable girls and the whispered remarks "See how well-dressed that boy is. His father must be very fond of him." When at last the tribe reached its new camping place and the women set about erecting the tents, these young dandies sat in state on a neighbouring hill-top and only descended when the meal was cooked.

Not only on the march but around the camp the youth dressed well and maintained a fine appearance, that his name might spread from tribe to tribe. His father secured his passage from the Mosquito into some other society, where he could play a more prominent rôle in the affairs of the community; and on all ceremonial occasions he now painted his face with the special emblems of this society in place of the haphazard markings of earlier years.² At night, too, he no longer slept at the side of the tent, like the women and children, and the married men "whose legs had grown heavy," but at the back opposite the door, a place commonly reserved for honoured guests.

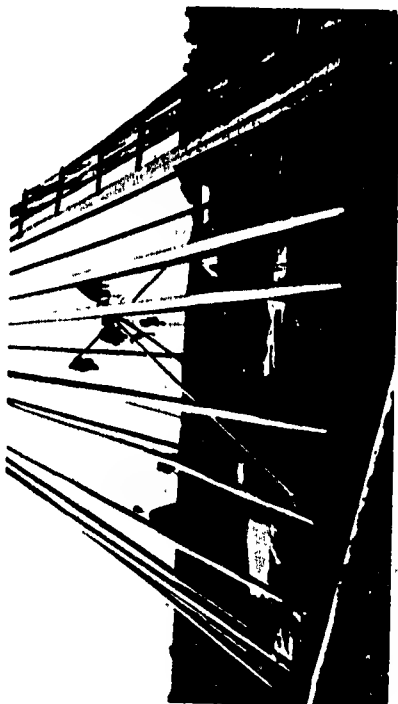
Thus did the young Saree gallant make his debut. The tribe, regarding celibacy in either sex as monstrous, expected him now to seek a wife. Before he married, however, he selected another lad as his "comrade," and established with him a kind of brotherhood relation that endured through life. Thenceforward the two friends became well-nigh inseparable. At evening they often mounted a horse, one behind the other, and circled the camp singing love songs, or playing simple melodies on a flageolet. Then toward midnight they dismounted, appointed a trysting-place, and stole away to their sweethearts' tents, hoping that when they scratched against the outer walls the girls would creep out and join them. Sometimes the girls did steal out, despite the certainty of a thrashing if their mothers detected them; and the youths, catching two horses (regard-

¹Such was the mode of adornment in the middle of the nineteenth century, after the trading-posts had flooded the plains with European gewgaws.

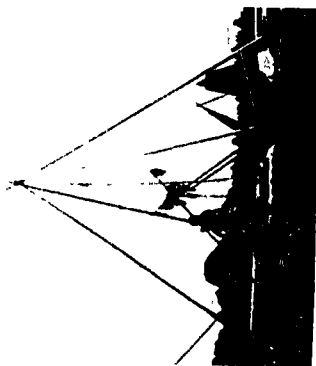
²The Saree remember the following native paints:

- (a) Several tints of red, brown, and yellow obtained from ochre, the colour of which varies naturally, and also changes with heat;
- (b) white from clay;
- (c) yellow from buffalo gall-stones;
- (d) black from charcoal, and also from a certain kind of earth, which, however, was never used for body decoration.

In painting bags these substances were mixed with buffalo fat, but in decorating the body with water only.



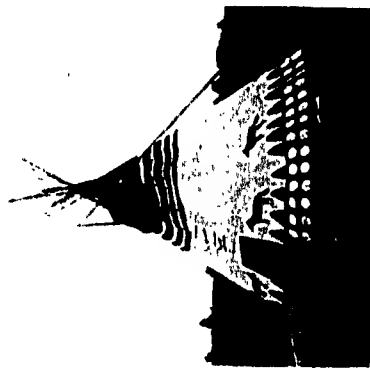
52823 B. The tent-cover removed, showing interior arrangement.



A. The four-pole foundation of a tent.



52812 C. The door of the beehive tent.



D. The wolf tent.

less of who owned them) mounted each with his own sweetheart and, singing, rode around the camp until nearly dawn.

Many a youth courted two or three girls at the same time, and even made overtures to the married women, for, with strange inconsistency, public opinion encouraged libertinism among single or married men while enjoining the strictest virtue on the women. The youth who succeeded in seducing a married woman generally fled with her to another band or tribe where they might escape detection for several months. Occasionally the husband pursued them, recovered his wife, and either killed her or cut off her nose; but since any punishment of this nature was liable to excite ill-will among her relatives he more often exacted one or two horses from her seducer and let the matter drop. Many husbands considered it beneath their dignity to pursue eloping wives; they merely recovered the equivalent of the marriage price from the relatives and purchased other wives. Secret infidelity aroused more resentment than open elopement. Parents sometimes disowned a girl who went astray before marriage, letting her become the common property of the camp; and a husband after degrading his unfaithful wife by sharing her with his "comrade," divorced her, often to meet the same fate. By our standards, therefore, the moral code was extremely lax for the one sex, and unduly severe for the other. It is not surprising that Sarcee mothers kept the strictest watch over their unmarried daughters, and never allowed them to sleep or to wander away alone. The marriageable girl never mingled openly with any youths except her own brothers, so that it was difficult for an admirer to discover whether or not she would welcome his attentions. One method was to flash at her the light from a looking-glass; if nothing happened she would probably accept him; but if she disliked him she would tell the other girls and make him their laughing-stock.

If the winning of his spurs on the war-path was the first "crisis" in a boy's life, the second—and the first in a girl's—was marriage. A youth generally chose his own wife and informed his parents, who then carried out the necessary negotiations with the parents of the girl. A girl had less freedom, for she was usually affianced as soon as she was marriageable; but she, too, could make her preference known to her mother and expect to receive a certain measure of consideration. The formal betrothal brought into play definite rules of conduct. Not only did the youth publicly avoid his fiancée, but their parents also avoided one another; furthermore, the youth might not even speak to his future father- or mother-in-law, and if either should happen to enter a tent in which he was present, he was obliged to slip away at the first opportunity. Yet at the same time he was expected to exchange coarse jests with his fiancée's sister or girl-cousin, a prerogative he would possess after marriage, when either might become his second wife; and similarly his fiancée jested with his brother or comrade. Secretly, too, they met as often as they wished, and quite often he openly sent her a necklace, or his personal bracelet in return for her own; she for her part nearly always furnished him with a pair of moccasins specially made with her own hands.

Formal betrothals were naturally irksome, and seldom prolonged more than 2 or 3 weeks unless the youth made it known that he was going on the war-path and preferred not to marry until his return. The fixing of

the actual wedding day rested with the girl's father. Choosing a convenient occasion, he dressed his daughter in her finest clothes, equipped her with horses, travois, bedding, and other household effects, and bade her erect her tent beside her future parents-in-law. There the bridegroom immediately settled down with her while his parents and kinsmen collected the bride-price.

Many marriages were contracted at short notice without a formal betrothal, particularly when the tribe was on the march. A crier would walk round the tents in the evening and announce that the chief and council had decided to move camp early the next morning. As the train marched away the gaily dressed youths pranced on their horses over to one flank, while the maidens lingered near their mothers. A youth might then ride up to some girl who had taken his fancy and ask her to marry him. Not daring to consent immediately, however well-disposed she might be, she would answer, "I will speak to my parents when we make camp." The youth retired as quickly as he had approached, but in the evening, when the Indians were pitching their tents, the mother would find out from her daughter what he had said and tell the father. Then, if both approved of the marriage, they informed their relatives, gathered together everything their daughter needed and sent her on the following day to pitch her tent beside her new parents-in-law. The youth generally observed that his suit had been accepted and kept away from the camp until evening, when his people directed his returning footsteps to the tent of his waiting bride.

During the first few days of their marriage the newly wed couple visited each of the bridegroom's kinsmen to present a pair of moccasins that the bride had made; and, after a brief meal, they carried back to their tent some trifling gift in recompense. In this same period, too, the young husband, either with his own hands or through his father, delivered the bride-price—horses, clothing, a gun perhaps, and other articles that the bride's father could apportion among those who had contributed to the dowry. If this initial payment seemed inadequate (and there was no fixed amount, except that it should exceed the dowry) he joined his wife's band for a time to work off the debt in labour; he took over the care of his father-in-law's horses, and surrendered all the meat (sometimes also the hides) he secured in hunting, being supported himself each day by the cooked food his mother-in-law sent over to his tent. Should one of his brothers-in-law admire any article in his possession he was expected to give it up cheerfully, unless it happened to be a society emblem that might never be surrendered without payment. His wife, however, might voice a protest where he might not, and very often she checked her brothers from carrying off anything they wished. Occasionally a man took to the war-path soon after his marriage. If he then succeeded in capturing a horse he invariably presented it to his wife's parents, who prized the animal very highly and lauded their daughter and son-in-law throughout the entire tribe.

A man called his wife *is'oiya*, and she called him *sik-ala*. Some men had two wives, often sisters; and when a man's wife died, he commonly married her sister. Similarly, when a woman's husband died, she sometimes passed into his brother's household. Hence there was a special term,

sindalli, for a man's sister-in-law or a woman's brother-in-law, and they were allowed great liberty in conversation, whether actually married to one another or not. Two wives of the same man, even if not sisters, commonly called each other older and younger sister if their ages differed considerably; otherwise the second wife was simply the "second woman." *serdi*. Marriage between first cousins was prohibited because they ranked as brothers and sisters. Aunts and uncles on either side (except a mother's sister, who was simply another "mother") ranked with older brothers and older sisters; and nephews and nieces with younger brothers and sisters unless they were so much younger that they could merge with sons and daughters. There were special terms for older and younger brothers and sisters, and women used a different word from men for "my son" and "my grandchild"; yet even with these additions the terms used to express relationships were rather few, as will appear from the following table:

icilla: my younger brother or male cousin; also, if only a little younger, my nephew.

im-ya: my older brother or male cousin; also, my uncle.

isalsu: my younger sister or female cousin; also, if only a little younger, my niece.

is-a: my older sister or female cousin; also, my father's sister.

sindalli: my wife's sister or husband's brother (older or younger).

it-aya: my father.

in-aya: my mother; my mother's sister.

si-ya: (man speaking) my son; my nephew, if much younger.

si-za: (woman speaking) my son; my nephew, if much younger.

si'sa: my daughter; my niece, if much younger.

is-aya: my grandfather, on either side.

is-a: my grandmother, on either side; also, my husband's sister

musdjonc: my wife's brother.

is-ura: (man speaking) my grandchild, of either sex.

ic-ya: (woman speaking) my grandchild, of either sex.

is'oiya: my wife.

sik-ola: my husband.

The Sarcee, like other plains' tribes, sharply differentiated the duties and status of a wife from those of her husband. She was obliged to carry wood and water, to attend to the food, the cleaning and dressing of hides, and the making of the family clothing; these things a man might do on the war-path, but not at home, except that a father might decorate the clothing of his unmarried son. Unaided, she erected and dismantled the tipi, or, if she needed help, called in another woman—but not her husband until recent times, when the reserve life broke down many of the old customs. During the day her place was near the door; even if she were lying down when a man entered the tent she had to rise and sit near the entrance. Grumbling, or interference in her husband's conversation with an outsider, earned her a severe thrashing. A brave, energetic man sometimes had two, three, and even four wives, of whom the first or head one occupied the place at his side; but she, too, had to move near the door at the entrance of visitors, and if ever the wives quarrelled the husband generally thrashed them all alike. His duties were both simple and precise: hunting, attending to the horses, and war. From his wife he demanded implicit obedience and respect; to be struck by a woman was a serious disgrace. If he owned fine clothes he expected her to display them outside his tent, just as she would display the fine clothes of her bachelor son, because by so doing she enhanced his prestige in the tribe.

Though he was absolute master in his own home, a man could not always abuse his wife with impunity, lest her parents take her away from him and marry her to some one else. This they might do if he were simply lazy, and failed to provide for her by hunting; if he proved a coward in war his wife would certainly scorn to live with him. Yet unless she had kinsmen ready to protect her she was largely at his mercy, for a woman could never divorce her husband, though she might run away from him. A man, on the other hand, could divorce his wife for infidelity, laziness, jealousy, in fact for any reason at all; and generally he not only retained her property to compensate him for the price he had paid for her but expected her people to make up the deficit. Little children always accompanied the mother, but boys in their teens could attach themselves to whichever parent they chose. Powerful checks on divorce were the woman's dependence on the man for the prime necessities of life, and the man's need of a woman's services in making his home comfortable. The Sareee, moreover, deprecated marital infelicity, and always advised young couples to behave very sedately toward one another for several months after marriage, lest joking and playing should lead to quarrels, and the quarrels become never-ending.

Even in 1921, when all the younger Sareee demanded church weddings, some of the older people still married after the manner of their forefathers. The man paid his bride's family one or two horses and sundry other things, and the bride received many presents from both her own people and her husband's kin. She then lived with him without further ado; but if he tired of her he sent her back without ceremony and both parties returned all gifts.

In July of that year a man 68 years of age, who had lost his first wife by death and divorced two subsequent wives, was preparing to visit a Cree reserve many miles away to inspect another prospective mate. He planned to visit her in company with a friend, and, if she measured up to his expectations, to retire to his friend's tent and send for her, offering in payment a horse and rig. Should she hesitate, however, and suggest a delay of a week or two, he intended to take the first train home and seek out some one more amenable.

Unscrupulous fathers sometimes used these old marriage customs, in modern times at least, as a means of acquiring wealth. Thus in 1919 a Sareee youth paid liberally for the privilege of marrying a Cree girl, whom he took home to his people. The young people seemed very happy, and at several dances during the subsequent weeks the youth's kinsmen bestowed shawls and other presents on the bride. But one day, when the husband happened to be absent, the girl's father suddenly appeared and carried off not only his daughter, but all the presents she had received. To add to the insult, he refused to return what her husband had paid for her. The Sareee then discovered that he had played the same trick on two or three other unsuspecting youths.

After marriage a man and his father-in-law no longer kept aloof, but his mother-in-law continued to avoid his presence, being forbidden either to speak to him or to look straight into his face. Though he might support her after her husband's death she could not share his tipi

unless she was blind (when her infirmity made it compulsory) or unless he removed the taboo by giving her a substantial present such as a gun or a horse. In 1921 the Sarece still adhered very strictly to their mother-in-law taboo, though some of the younger generation seemed to regard it rather lightly.

As soon as she conceived the young wife became the object of special care. Heavy work was forbidden her, but she collected firewood and performed other light duties around the camp, gathered a supply of dried berries to feed the old women who would be summoned in case of sickness, and again when her delivery drew near, and prepared a moss-bag for the reception of her baby. No ugly man might approach her, nor might any one grimace in her presence, lest he mar the face of her unborn child. If she struck a dog, a horse, or a child, her own child might develop a birthmark, for the Indians believed that birthmarks arose from some thoughtless action of the mother during pregnancy. Neither she nor her husband might step over a dog lest she suffer a miscarriage; consequently, the family dogs were driven outside the tipi. Neither might her husband choke a dog, a buffalo calf, or a horse, lest his child be stillborn. He slept on a separate couch after the third month, and after the seventh the woman's own mother often remained constantly at her side. Many an expectant mother tried to determine the sex of her child by its movements in the womb, believing that a boy was more active than a girl; and often she attached to her dress one of the curious "buffalo-stones"¹ in the hope that it would facilitate her delivery. The Sarece generally desired large families, but a woman who for any reason wished to avoid conception bought an amulet from some medicine-man or woman who would guarantee its efficacy.

The first pangs of labour drove the mother into a separate tent, and brought to her aid three or four old women, one of them a medicine-woman. They warned away all men and unmarried girls, laid the mother on worn-out robes, dressed her (if not already so dressed) in her oldest clothes (which were afterwards hung up in a tree to rot²), and removed all bracelets and other ornaments. The medicine-woman then gave her a decoction of boiled herbs or other specific for easy delivery, and encouraged her to walk to and fro inside the tent as long as she could. If parturition was long and difficult word passed outside, and the anxious husband or a near relative vowed to the Maker that he would buy a medicine-bundle, join a society, or perform some other meritorious action if mother and child both survived. When at last the moment for delivery arrived the woman dropped to her knees, and one attendant, standing at her back, held her shoulders while another tightly clasped her round the waist.³ They buried the afterbirth in the ground, bound a broad belt of hide round the mother's waist, and, laying her on her bed, counselled her not to rise before the next day. As soon as the tent was in order again women relatives appeared bringing them berry soup, and tobacco for the attendants to smoke. Unmarried girls, too, might enter now, and the

¹See pp. 78, 79

²In recent times they were burnt.

³If the mother were alone, as happened not infrequently, she grasped a pole of the tipi

father often glanced inside to see his new-born babe; but he generally departed just as quickly, fearing that his legs might become "heavy" if they touched any object in the tent and thereby render him incompetent in war.¹ Each attendant, however, he rewarded with a gift, such as a dress, a blanket, or a beaded belt.

In so far as it was possible for a hunting people constantly on the move, the Saree seem to have enjoined on the mother a certain amount of post-natal as well as pre-natal care. She lay down as soon as she was delivered, not sharing the Blackfoot belief that crawling around the tent hastened recovery. Only after 1 or 2 days of complete rest in her tipi did she return to her husband's tent; and for some time afterwards she refrained from all heavy work and concerned herself mainly with the care of her child. As the diet of the Indians consisted principally of meat she could not wean it until it reached the age of about 3. When that time came she left it in charge of a relative for a few days, or made her breasts distasteful by smearing them with nicotine.

Twins occasioned no special concern. The Saree generally attributed them to the mother's error in eating the meat of a buffalo cow that had borne twin calves, but sometimes also to intercourse after she had become pregnant and received from a medicine-woman a belt or other object to facilitate delivery.

It was quite common for a man to adopt a boy, particularly if he had recently lost one of his own sons; but the adoption of girls was rare. No payment was necessary, since the boy did not give up his own parents, but merely acquired another home.

¹Stepping upon the clothing of the mother or of her new-born child was believed to bring men ill-luck, but not necessarily, as the Blackfoot thought, lameness.

CHAPTER IV

THE CYCLE OF SARCEE LIFE (*Continued*)

In a Sarcee camp hardly a day passed unmarked by some interesting or exciting event. The buffalo hunt, of course, never lacked its thrills, nor did enthusiasm ever wane at the summer Sun Dance, or the festivals of the organized societies. Even on non-festival days something was generally stirring in and around the tents. At dawn one or more of the old people always wandered away to pray on a hill-top, and the boys to take their morning bath in the river. Young warriors rounded up the horses to make sure that none were missing, and women huddled over their cooking-vessels, or laboured at the dressing of hides and the making of moccasins. Throughout the hours of daylight two or three men checked the horses from straying too far away, and kept a lookout for buffalo and human enemies. Listen to the singing from within that tent; old P - is selling his medicine-bundle, and each time he unwraps one of the articles inside it he teaches the purchaser its appropriate song. This man is decorating his blanket with his war deeds, that one the outside of his tent with scenes from a vision. You string of horses moving among the tipis indicates a wedding; the gaily dressed girl who leads them must be the bride herself. Here are the boys lined up for a sling-fight; did you see that lad charge his foe and capture a trophy? Away in that far tent where the drum is throbbing some of the men have turned to gambling, and are staking their horses, their weapons, and even their clothes on their skill and luck in the "hand" game. Several of the young fellows plot a party tonight; they intend to sing and drum outside old D's tipi until he rises from his bed, allays their ardour with a pipe or a pot of berry soup, and speeds them on their way to molest some other involuntary host.

All these incidents never happened, it may be, at one place on one day. Yet camp life was always full of variety, for young and old knew many distractions and pastimes for hours not occupied by more serious pursuits. The favourite pastimes of adults were two gambling games, "hidden-sticks" or the "hand-game," and "four-sticks" or "dice."

In the hand-game a number of players divided into two groups that took their places on opposite sides of a tent. At the back of the tent sat the chief as arbiter, with ten painted sticks for tallies. The gaming outfit was produced - two pairs of wood or bone pencils, known technically as a "long" pair and a "short" pair, though they were generally of about the same length, 4 or 5 inches, and distinguished only by marks or cords. The group that first received the sticks handed them to its two most skilful players, who sat or knelt down side by side, while opposite them sat or knelt the guesser of the other group. Then the play began. Some one furiously pounded a drum, each hider juggled his pair of sticks from one hand to the other while the rest of the company sang, shouted, imitated the cries of birds and animals, and tried in every way to distract and

confuse the leading players. Suddenly the guesser jerked forward his finger and pointed successively to whichever hand of each opponent he imagined to hold a pair of sticks. If he guessed both pairs aright his party received two tallies, if only one each party received a tally, whereas if both guesses were wrong the hiders received two tallies. After discovering which hands concealed the sticks the guesser had next to find out which

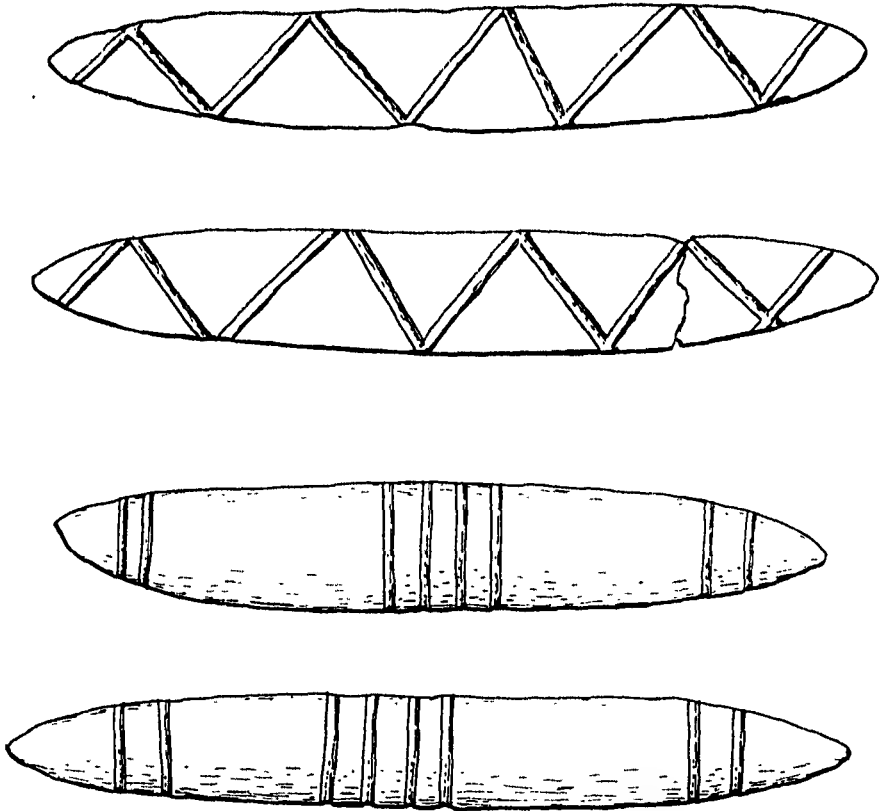


Figure 2 A set of gambling sticks.

held the long pair and which the short, the prize for this further guess being one tally. The game ended as soon as one party or the other succeeded in winning all ten tallies, and the losers then handed over the stakes.

Women sometimes played a simplified hand-game with only one pair of sticks. Their favourite game, however, was dice, for which they used two pairs of flat bone sticks, pointed at each end and decorated, by incising and painting, on one face, the one pair with a zigzag design, the

other with a banded or other pattern. The player threw the dice onto the ground or a blanket, and read the count as follows:

	Points
One zigzag or one band up and three blanks.....	6
Two zigzags and two bands up.....	4
Two zigzags or two bands up.....	2
One zigzag and one band up.....	2

No other throws counted. Two women, or occasionally four, matched each other and kept the tally with twelve long sticks.

Outdoors men gambled at still another game, which called for a small hoop with beaded spokes and two arrows. The hoop or wheel was bowled against an obstacle, and, as it fell, one man from one side and one from the other thrust his arrow under it and read the score according to its direction in relation to the spokes.¹

Much gambling accompanied two other games, shinny and lacrosse, the former more popular with men, the latter with women. Children, as usual, had many more pastimes than adults. They indulged in wrestling and kicking contests, fought with mud balls slung from the ends of sticks, coasted on strips of hide or make-shift toboggans, competed with darts and with bows and arrows, lined up in opposing ranks for the wheel and the ball games, and played with toys such as buzzers, bull-roarers, and tops. Since Wissler has described exactly the same games among the neighbouring Blackfoot Indians,² it is unnecessary to discuss them in detail here. Two minor pastimes not included in his account were fighting with clubs made from hard bulrushes woven at the ends into balls, and a girls' game like pick-a-back. In the latter the girls sat in a row facing a girl at a base. This child then closed her eyes, and, chanting *sitsiqotiqa* "straight to me," groped for each girl in turn and "pick-a-backed" her to the base.

Pastimes such as these served to while away idle days in camp, but for the adult Indian they paled before the excitement of hunting and of war. No one might interfere if a man wished to go on the war-path. Indeed, during the nineteenth century, youths received every encouragement to go, and if they had the luck to capture guns or horses quickly became leaders of new raiding parties. Even women sometimes accompanied their husbands, though a man who had two or more wives would never take the first wife. The widow of a warrior remained with his people for a time before returning to her relatives; and the parents of the slain man kept as a memento his buffalo horse or some other object that had belonged to him.

Sometimes a man went out to raid the enemy single-handed; more often he announced that he was prepared to lead a war-party and invited others to accompany him. Because enlistment was purely voluntary, only a man distinguished by his courage and previous successes could hope to lead a party. The raiders marched rapidly but cautiously, nearly always sending a scout ahead to spy out the country. Whenever they sighted this scout returning, and while he was still a mile or more away, they chanted their "scouting song"; and at night, after they had camped,

¹For a fuller description of the same game see Wissler op. cit., vol. VII, p. 60

²Wissler op. cit., vol. VII, pp. 53 et seq.

they chanted another song, or group of songs, commonly known as the "wolf song," because it ended in a howl like a wolf's. Every large party included a medicine-man who could perform the ceremony called "looking for enemies." He designated an appropriate evening, and while their buffalo meat was roasting over a fire, instructed the warriors to build him a small shelter and to bring offerings of cloth and other things over which he might pray for the success of the givers. From inside the shelter he intoned the "looking for enemies" song, and the circle outside joined in with him. Four times they repeated the song, and each time, at its close, he offered up a prayer. Then, unseen by the watchers outside, but plainly audible, his familiar spirit visited him; and after the visit had ended, the medicine-man came out to share the silent meal. All then lay down to sleep, the medicine-man merely lingering to paint his face with the pattern prescribed by his medicine-dream. Very early the next morning he awakened the warriors and gave them his message: "In such and such a place horses and men have been delivered into my hands," or "Such and such a place I was told to avoid." Whatever the message might be the warriors responded *a-i* and faithfully carried out his instructions.

Occasionally the warriors seried out their fortunes with a badger skin after the manner described by Old Sarece, an old and highly respected Indian who had witnessed the ceremony during his youth. A certain man in his war-party killed a badger and removed all its inside organs, leaving only a little blood. He poured on this blood a little water, and sprinkled over it first some gunpowder, next red ochre, and finally tiny shreds of sage-grass. Then he laid the skin on its back for the night, facing the head toward the east and resting it on a pillow of sage-grass that covered two lumps of buffalo dung. In the morning the leader ordered all his followers to dress in full war-costume and sery out their fortunes. The man who had prepared the skin went first. One glance inside revealed the fate that was awaiting him: if doomed to be scalped by the enemy he saw his scalpless head; if to die of sickness he gazed on his emaciated and discoloured body; but if he was destined to attain a ripe old age he beheld his grey-haired form carrying a walking-stick. One after another the warriors advanced to learn their fate. When it came to Old Sarece's turn his leader said to him "Go and look at yourself. We must all die some day, and if you are destined to reach old age you will be able to tell your grandchildren about this skin." Old Sarece saw himself grey-haired, blind in one eye, and wearing two shell necklaces that symbolized he would become the owner of two medicine-bundles. When he reported what he had seen, the leader told him that he would attain great honour in his old age, but not in his youth. The oracle proved true in every detail.

Many a man on the war-path solemnly vowed that if he returned in safety he would perform some meritorious action—he would join, for example, a certain society, or purchase a medicine-bundle or a painted tent. Sometimes, too, the Sarece followed the Blackfoot custom of confessing to one another the names of their sweethearts; but whereas the Blackfoot believed that this narration of their conquests in the field of love contributed in some way to their success in war, the Sarece attached no significance to it and in fact converted the episode into a jest. Some man conspicuous for his energy and courage cleaned the intestine of a

buffalo and filled it with meat as far as one end, where he concealed a tough cord of rawhide. He then cooked his "sausage," cut it into sections, and distributed it among the warriors, secretly bestowing the part containing the rawhide on the laziest and most worthless member of the party. As each man bit off a mouthful from his portion he exclaimed "I'll bite this off with so-and-so," mentioning the name of his sweetheart; but the victim, vainly clenching his teeth on the rawhide, became the laughing-stock of all his comrades.

All the plains' tribes dressed and looked so much alike that an Indian who met a stranger on the open prairies could not tell whether he were friend or foe except by speech or signals. Every tribe, therefore, had its sign language or set of signals whereby its members communicated with one another from a distance. The Sarcee signs were:

Sarcee: flick the right index in the corner of the mouth and click.

Blackfoot: close the last three fingers and pass the thumb and extended forefinger down the side of the leg.

Blood: draw the half-closed hand across the teeth.

Pegon: draw the closed fist down the cheek.

Cree: make the motion of cutting the throat.

Dakota Sioux: flip the thumb and forefinger together.

Other Sioux: make the movement of parting the hair.

White man: pass the hand across the forehead, indicating the wearing of a peaked cap.

Going to war: hold the right hand up, palm out, and move it forward, turn it down and put the palm toward the ground; finally sweep the hand under and forward as for "advance."

Scalp taken: make the motion of cutting and removing a scalp.

Horse stolen: hold the hand up, palm out, then drop the arm, pointing the forefinger toward the ground.

Gun taken: shake the upflitted hand, palm out, then make the motion of pulling back the hammer of a gun.

Wounded: hold the palm up and point to the wound.

Victorious: hold the palm up, then close the fist and shake it toward the ground.

All the enemy killed: rub the palms together.

One or more of own party killed: hold up a blanket and let it drop once for each man killed.

Number of horses or scalps taken: hold up the hand and swing it in the direction of the enemy's camp the corresponding number of times.

Fight in progress: close the fists and pretend to rub them together while keeping them, however, an inch or two apart.

Cease fighting: set the fists together, then move them wide apart.

Peace: raise a blanket or a white flag.

Enemy or buffalo in sight: hold up the hand and draw in inwards signifying "come in close."

Go back: hold up the hand and push it away.

Keep quiet: lower the hand toward the ground.

Come quick: draw the hand quickly inwards.

No: wave the hands apart.

Yes: hold the right arm out, index pointing outward, then quickly close the index and sweep the arm inwards.

What is it? shake the right hand, palm out, in front of the face.

Good: hold the hand out in front, palm down, fingers pointing out, and wave it sideways, sometimes a little upward.

Many, much: with both hands make the gesture of scooping something up, e.g., a handful of beads from a dish.

Finished: put the hands together and wave them apart.

I am poor: point the left index out and run the back of the right index along it from the tip in.

Although certain raids originated in a lust for vengeance that could be appeased only by blood, the majority were more in the nature of sporting events played for the highest stakes, seeing that their primary aim was not so much to annihilate the enemy as to secure scalps, horses, guns, and other trophies that brought a man honour and renown. There was no more merit in killing a man and taking his scalp than in stealing his gun or driving away his horses. Whenever he could, naturally, a warrior took all three, scalp, gun, and horses; but a small party of half a dozen men could not successfully attack a large camp, and the Sarece, though brave often to recklessness, avoided pitched battles unless the weight of numbers leaned heavily on their side. Hence, nearly all their raids were tip-and-run affairs. Here they drove off a band of horses, there they massacred three or four isolated foes and bore off their scalps and women, after which, elated by their success, they retreated as quickly as they could and approached their main camp singing "praising songs." Immediately their people gathered inside or outside a tent, and, to the beating of drums, chanted songs of victory while the women danced joyfully in front of the conquerors.

Tribal etiquette permitted a warrior to paint his exploits, once in his lifetime, on his blanket, on the inside lining of his tent, or on a special suit of clothing decorated with the tails of weasels;¹ and these paintings, interpreted by their owners, give us vivid glimpses of certain raids that occurred in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.² Plate V (page 34) shows the blanket of Old Sarece, painted by a relative with red and blue figures from patterns the old man himself had cut out in paper. He was 79 years old when he thus revived his war memories, rather reluctantly, because he could no longer depict them on a buffalo hide, but only on the worthless hide of a steer. The scenes are not in consecutive order, but arranged to suit his fancy and to conform with the shape of the blanket.

Scene 1 (in centre) four figures in blue represent Cree Indians, four in red, across the three guns and the tomahawk, Sarece, the figure on the right grasping a knife being Old Sarece himself.

"When my brother exhausted his horse during a certain buffalo-hunt he abandoned it to graze all night in the open prairie. Early the next morning I was sent to bring it in, and discovered it picketed beside a river by four Cree Indians, who had removed its saddle and lain down to sleep, one of them using the saddle as a pillow. Three of the men possessed guns, the fourth only a tomahawk. I stealthily hid their guns in some brush and summoned three of my kin-men, to whom I handed over the stolen weapons. We then awakened the four men and mocked them. Suddenly a band of our Blackfoot allies rode up. They immediately massacred three of our prisoners; the fourth, grasping his tomahawk, tried to swim across the river, but we shot him before he reached half-way."

Scene 2 (left centre) a blue tomahawk.

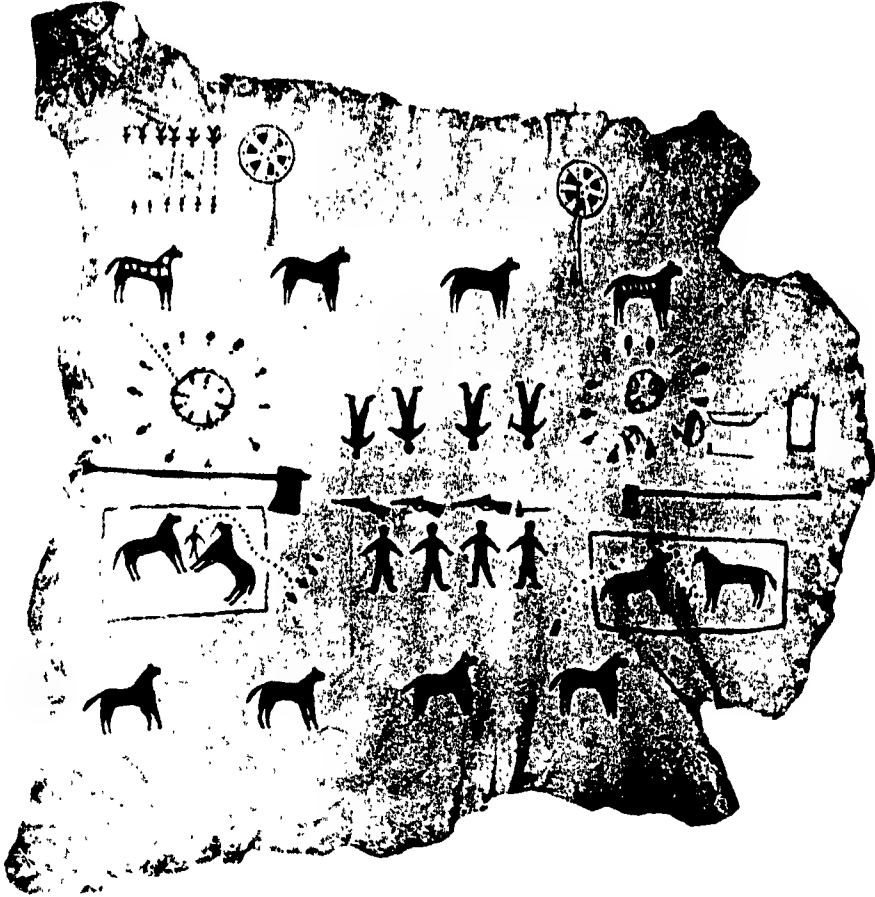
"I was once travelling with a party north of Calgary, near a place called "Picking Berries," when some Cree stole into our camp and drove off a few of our horses. We pursued and overtook them, but they took refuge in a tuck, held us at bay during the day with rapid fire from their guns, and

¹He could repaint them on a second blanket, tent-lining, or suit of clothes if the first became worn out, but not if he sold it.

²See also the war-narratives in Ch. I

escaped during the night, without a casualty on either side. Afterwards I gathered a blanket, a set of bow and arrows, and this tomahawk from their trench; and one of my companions, One-Spotted, picked up a blanket. We presented these trophies to some of our old men in accordance with our tribal custom."

PLATE V



77013

Old Sarcée's blanket, with the record of his war deeds

Scene 3 (left side towards bottom) two blue horses, and a man standing between them holding their bridles, inside a red square; a line of blue tracks leading from the man to four red spade-like figures outside the square.

"Shortly before the great smallpox epidemic ravaged our tribe (1870 A.D.) thirteen of us discovered a camp of Cree near Big River, and I with four other men was sent forward to steal some of their horses. I crept inside their corral before daylight and led out two horses, as you can see in the picture. One I gave to my companions, the other I kept for myself."

Scene 4 (half-way up left side): eight red figures inside a red circle surrounded by a dozen red figures outside; blue dots leading outward from the circle.

"Twelve of us (only eight are shown on the blanket) went on the warpath to Montana, where some Sioux sighted us through telescopes and pursued us. We took refuge in a trench where their bullets would strike the ground above us, and in the darkness we watched the fires that they had lit all around. Our leader then suggested that some one gifted with medicine power should scout out a route of escape. I volunteered, and, finding one exit unguarded, returned and led our whole party to safety."

Scene 5 (top and bottom): two rows each of four horses, two red and two blue.

"Eight of us went on the warpath against the Sioux, and I was sent ahead to spy out the enemy's camp, which was close to the bank of a river. All night I lay concealed in a cutbank. At dawn I saw a Sioux warrior wearing only one moccasin drive their horses out of the corral and hobble two of them near a tent. With my gun cocked and ready I boldly walked past him, cut the hobbles of his two horses and drove off the entire herd, which numbered many more than are shown on the blanket. The Sioux evidently mistook me for a fellow-member of his band, because he quietly re-entered his tent without raising an alarm. We rode hard all that day, and at evening, when we were safe from pursuit, divided up the horses among us."

Scene 6 (top left-hand corner): two lines of six figures each, one red and the other blue, joined by tracks; two blue figures lying prostrate between them.

"I joined a party of Blackfoot, Blood and Sarece Indians that started from Blackfoot Crossing to raid the Sioux. One noon, however, our enemies discovered and attacked us. Two of our men (the two blue figures lying prostrate) were killed before an eclipse of the sun put an end to the fighting."

Scene 7 (half-way up right side): tobacco pouch, pipe, tomahawk, and bow and bowcase with quiver full of arrows.

"Eight different bands of Indians attacked us near Fort Vermilion, and in the fighting fifty of our tribe were killed, including our chief Bull-Head. The enemy then retired, and we who survived searched the battle-field to pick up anything they had left behind. I found the bow and arrows, tomahawk, pipe and tobacco pouch."

Scene 8 (right side towards middle): seven red figures inside a red circle, surrounded by a dozen figures outside it; two men close together, one grasping the other.

"Once when we were travelling north of Red Deer River we encountered some Cree Indians, who fled for cover to a hole in the ground. We surrounded them and killed two men before the rest escaped during the night. One of our own warriors had been shot in an attempt to rush their position. To prevent the enemy from stripping the corpse and taking the scalp I crept forward and dragged the body back to our line."

Scene 9 (right side towards bottom): two red horses and a man standing between them holding their bridles, inside a red square; blue tracks leading to a figure outside the square.

"A number of us joined with a party of Blackfoot, Blood and Piegan warriors to raid the Sioux, and after travelling several days we sighted one of the enemy's camps. I and six other men were sent forward to raid it. We crept into the corral shortly before dawn and each led away one horse. Mine I presented to the leader of the party."

The picture writings on this blanket are so palpably realistic that even without their author's interpretations their meanings could hardly remain in doubt. Yet the Sarece had also a few more conventionalized

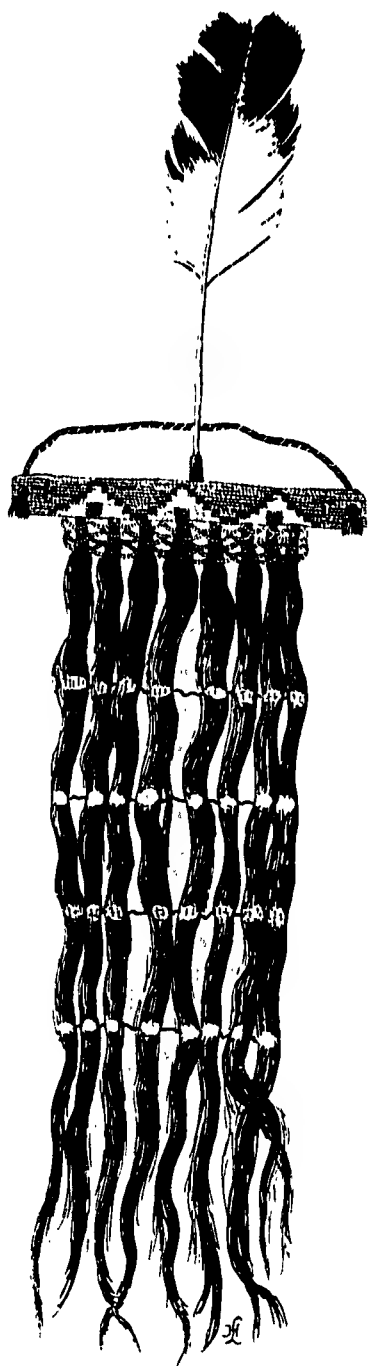


Figure 3 Head-plume worn as a war memorial
($\frac{1}{2}$ natural size.)

symbols, four of which are shown in Figure 4, where *a* represents a war party, *b* a scout's movement, *c* a scalp, and *d* a captured horse.

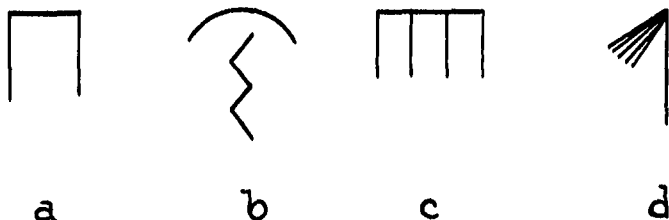


Figure 4. Conventional war signs.

The successful warrior had other ways of making known his exploits besides painting them on his blanket or his tent. During the festival of the Sun Dance, and at certain other ceremonies, he could recite them in public, when he faced the risk of correction or ridicule if he dared to exaggerate or embroider. For special occasions, too, he generally wore some trophy that he had captured in battle, or made to recall some deed. Figure 3 shows the head-plume that was worn by one old warrior to commemorate the following encounter with some Sioux.

"About 30 of us set out to raid the Sioux. As we lay in hiding near their camp a solitary man walked unsuspectingly towards us. We shot him, stripped him of his clothes and tore off his scalp. I was the last to reach his body and secured only a fragment of his scalp, but even that entitled me to count a coup. Most of us then returned home, but four men remained behind to steal some horses. One of them was killed, one brought back a few horses and the other two returned empty-handed. Afterwards, to commemorate my part in the raid, I made this head-plume, using horse-hair instead of the original scalp because my fragment of it was too small."

Sport combined with danger in most of these raids, and in some was uppermost, so that now and then one had an unexpectedly happy conclusion. In the early part of the nineteenth century, apparently, seven Saree warriors who had travelled far to the southward discovered a camp of "Utah" Indians, and while six of them remained in hiding during the night one youth crept forward to reconnoitre. Right in the centre of the camp he came upon two tents and cautiously peered through their doorways. In the first slept an Indian and his wife, in the second, all alone, their daughter, whose clothes were hanging all around the wall. The scout returned to his comrades, told them what he had seen, and said "Wait for me here one day, and if I don't come back, go home, for you will know that something has happened to me." He then re-entered the camp and crept in under the girl's blanket. Recognizing from his clothes that he was a stranger, she pulled the communication line that connected her tent with her father's and began to stir up the fire; but when the fire-light fell upon the youth and she saw how handsome he was, she begged her father to spare his life and let her marry him. The father consented, and, calling in all the chiefs and leading men, asked them to treat the young man courteously, because he was making him his son-in-law.

The youth lived with his wife's people for some time; he even accompanied them on the war-path and brought in many horses to pay for his

bride. But when he began to pine for his own home his father-in-law consented that he should return and take his wife with him. Four of her brothers accompanied them, carrying for his kinsmen many blankets and other things to indicate that he had married into a wealthy family. He remarked their nervousness as they drew near the main Saree camp, and went forward alone to ensure their friendly reception. Entering first the tent of his father, he asked him to summon all the chiefs, to whom he related his story. The Saree joyfully welcomed the Utah Indians and entertained them for several weeks; then, when the time came for the visitors to return home, every man and woman in the camp brought them a horse or some clothing to repay them for their earlier presents. Peace reigned between the two peoples for many years thereafter, but in the end war broke out again.

The Indian overtaken by sickness turned for help to those medicine-men who were reputed to have gained through personal visions the power of healing. They chanted their dream-songs over him, gave him perhaps an amulet to wear, and thenceforth watched his progress from day to day, not without receiving substantial payments. Occasionally a medicine-man sucked out blood and pus through a bird-bone tube, or he prescribed a herbal remedy, learned in most cases from the neighbouring Cree;¹ but genuinely efficacious remedies there were few or none, the Indian placing his chief reliance in incantations and prayers. Old men visited the tipi to pray over the patient, and relatives sought to bring about his recovery with fervent vows. The Saree seem never to have run amok when afflicted with incurable diseases, as sometimes happened, apparently, among the Blackfoot.

When the end of life drew near relatives painted the dying man either with red ochre, or with the marks peculiar to the society of which he had been a member, dressed him in his finest clothes, and wrapped his other garments in a bundle behind him. Often a young man stepped forward and threw a fine blanket over the corpse, thereby expressing a sympathy that was none the less genuine because it did not escape subsequent reward. Parents and wife put on their oldest garments, the father unbraided his hair, and the mother and the wife cut their hair short. The women also gashed their legs with flints or arrow-points, and frequently cut off a finger at the joint, so that even though the depth of their sorrow found no outlet in weeping, the pain of the mutilated fingers would release their tears. Neighbours always stood ready to perform the operation, one woman holding the patient's wrist while another laid a knife to the joint and severed it with a blow from an axe. Refusal to undergo the mutilation indicated heartlessness; even men at times submitted to it voluntarily, especially fathers stricken with grief by the loss of favourite sons.²

After a short delay to enable all the people to join the funeral train the relatives placed the dead man, his clothes, weapons, and occasionally

¹One old medicine-man, Many Wounds, claimed to know through a vision herbal remedies for seven different complaints. In each case he prescribed a potion made by crushing a herb and boiling it in water. One herb, he stated, made the water red; that he gave for chest troubles. Another, which turned the water yellow, he used for cramps in the stomach.

²Of the women living on the Saree reserve in 1921 one had lost three joints on one hand and one on the other; a second woman the first joints of both her little fingers; and a third a joint on each thumb and little finger.

certain other possessions on a travois, lashed it to one of his horses, and dragged it to a tree on a neighbouring hill-top. There, wrapping the corpse and its clothes into a bundle, they deposited it on a high branch, abandoned the weapons and other goods, killed the horse at the foot of the tree, and returned to camp, leaving the parents and the wife to weep under the grave, even to sleep there a night or two until some kinsmen led them home. In camp they clipped the mane and tail of one of the deceased's best horses and distributed his property according to his wishes, if he had expressed any, and if not, by mutual agreement among the nearest kin, including generally the widow. After their confinement to a reserve the destruction of horses was prohibited, but as late as 1919, when they buried an old warrior named Wolf-Carrier, the Sarcee secretly killed his favourite horse, and threw into a crevice between two rocks all his property except his horses and his medicine-bundles.

Men of distinction received special burial. Fellow-tribesmen laid out their corpses in their tents, hung up their spare clothing around the walls, killed their favourite horses outside, and forthwith abandoned the camp.

When a man was killed in war the father, if still alive, clipped the mane and tail of one of his son's horses, and, after piercing with a friend's aid both his shoulder-blades, passed through the holes a cord whose ends were attached to a buffalo-skull. He then drove one arrow into his breast, and others into his arms and legs; and, leading the horse by the halter, paraded around the camp, pitifully dragging the buffalo-skull behind him. At once some warrior leaped forward, snatched away the halter, and, mounting the horse, rode around the tents singing war songs and calling for volunteers to follow his banner in seeking revenge. Then the old father, released by some one else from the buffalo-skull and the arrows, marched proudly to and fro, chanting the praises of his son and of the warrior who had undertaken to avenge him. That same evening volunteers gathered in the leader's tent to learn the time of their departure. Often the father joined them when they set forth, their leader riding one of the dead man's horses.

With few exceptions, men who lost their wives or sons either joined war-parties, or paid prolonged visits to other bands or tribes in order to forget their grief. A bereaved father sometimes wandered off alone and attempted some desperate deed against his enemies, careless whether or not it cost him his life; generally, however, his "comrade" (if still alive) accompanied him and endeavoured to shield him from harm. Parents, husbands, and wives mourned for an indefinite period, wearing their oldest clothes. As a rule the tribe considered about 6 months sufficient. At the close of that term, therefore, a friend called them into his tent, painted their faces, and dressed them in good clothes, for which service they or their kinsfolk paid him later.

The average Sarcee stoically accepted death without fear, even though he cherished no hope of a happy Elysium. The soul or the shadow, he fancied (regarding the two as identical), wandered away to a cold sandy region far to the eastward, there to dwell with its fellows in ragged tents, and to gnaw around its camp-fire the dry bones of buffaloes that had perished ages ago. Many wept as they sat, longing for the bright world

that had been taken from them; and at night they sometimes wandered around the camps of the living Indians, making shrill noises like the wind. Often during the hours of darkness the Sarece have seen a long flame shoot up and down in the sky, and recognized the fire of the shades. Yet happily, even into that world of gloom and misery hope could send a tiny gleam. In every child that began to stir in its mother's womb the Maker implanted the soul or shadow of some one who had gone before; and whenever a baby died, and a new one was born soon after, its mother knew that the soul of her earlier child had come back to her in the later.

"My mother was examining an old battle-field when she felt a wind blow under her dress, and discovered a day or two afterwards that she had conceived. Later, when I was born, she was not surprised to find a birthmark on my chest, for she knew that I was the reincarnation of some warrior who had been killed in the battle."

CHAPTER V

SOCIETIES

An earlier chapter mentioned the five societies or clubs, to one or other of which every male Sursi belonged at some time or other in his career. Dr. Pliny Goddard has described them in considerable detail,¹ but since my information, derived from three elderly men, differs from his on certain points, and supplements it in others, an independent description of the societies will not be out of place, even though it may entail considerable repetition.

The names of the societies were:

isi: "mosquitoes."

ikura: "dogs."

tasqina: called by Goddard "police," but translated by my informants as "those painted red."

ukottenjua: called by Goddard "preventers," but translated by my informants as "those who make others their associates."

da-wa: a small yellow bird found in swampy places, species not determined.

The number of members in each of these societies varied from year to year, but seldom rose above fifty or fell below twenty. Every male Indian had to join the Mosquito society before he was eligible for any other; hence nearly all the members of this society were young men. From the Mosquitoes he could pass into any other society he wished, and might, if wealthy, belong to three or four at the same time. Generally he sold his membership in one and joined another at intervals of a few years, then dropped out from them all when he became old. Middle-aged men tended to congregate in the Dogs and Painted Red societies, letting the younger men predominate in the other three; but the latter always required one elderly man to make the proclamations for the annual dances, and usually contained three or four. Although the societies, therefore, possessed the germs of an age-grading system, they never developed it, or established any precise order of rank.

Throughout the greater part of the year the societies were in abeyance, and their members scattered among the different bands. Only during one short period did each in turn become prominent, during its four-day summer dance, celebrated at a time determined by its leaders, but always before the celebration of the Sun Dance. It then erected a very large tent (or joined together two ordinary tents) in the centre of the camp-circle alongside the tent of the tribal chief; and its leaders assumed complete control of the camp in place of that chief, even to the extent of forbidding any one to leave without their consent. They directed any buffalo-hunting that occurred during the four-day period,² and under their direction the

¹Goddard, P. E.: Dancing Societies of the Sursi Indians; Anth. Papers, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., vol. II, New York, 1916.

²At all other periods individual hunters could ride freely outside the camp and even run down the buffalo.

hunters carried all the buffalo meat to camp for the society to distribute, if its proper officials were not themselves present at the hunt to distribute the meat on the ground. One society, and one alone, the "Painted Red," functioned also at another season; it acted as a police force during the celebration of the Sun Dance.¹

The "Painted Red" society was peculiar in another respect, for it had only one leader, whereas all the others had two. These officials were not elected, but obtained their rank by the purchase of the necessary insignia. The "Dogs" had in addition two special officials, "lariat owners," who were virtually co-ordinate with the leaders and always consulted on matters of moment.² Each society counted furthermore four (or in one case two) quasi-officials called "workers", who did not participate in the dancing but sat near the door; their duties were to erect the tent, to tend the smudge fire, to distribute all the food, and to perform such other labours as were necessary.

New members were inducted at any period preceding the annual dance, generally all at one time. The workers erected a special tent for the occasion, and those who were selling their membership called in the equivalent number of purchasers, whom the old men (the drummers and singers) painted with the appropriate markings and instructed in the songs and dances. The new members compensated these old men with clothes and other goods, in addition to paying the ex-members who had resigned to them their seats.

Every society dance began and ended in the same way. After the tent was erected and the members gathered inside it, the workers kindled a smudge of sweet-grass, over which the leaders held their insignia and silently prayed. The other members followed them; each stood over the smudge with a blanket drawn over his head and offered a silent prayer. At night again, just before the members lay down to sleep,³ the same ceremony was repeated. Evening prayer was indeed not an uncommon feature in the every-day life of the Sareee, for they believed that it protected them from evil spirits and ensured them good dreams; but in their society dances they at no time omitted either the closing or the opening prayer.

MOSQUITOES

This society had two leaders and two workers. Every member stripped to his breech-clout, painted a red streak across his face from one cheek-bone to the other, daubed his body white, planted a white eagle feather with pendant string on the right side of his head, and bound the claws of the same bird to his right wrist. The two leaders wore bandoliers of buffalo hide trimmed along the edges with buffalo-calf hoofs (later bandoliers of buckskin trimmed with deer toes); and they daubed their bodies, not white, but yellow. Four old men took their places in the centre of the tent, beat four drums and sang, with intervals between their songs for smoking. The members, seated in a circle around them, rose and danced without moving from their places during the first three songs, then,

¹Goddard assigns this function to three societies, the "Dogs," the "Painted Red," and "Those who make others their associates."

²Goddard gives the "Mosquitoes" one leader, the "Dogs" four, and the rest two each.

³Those for whom there was no room in the tent slept in their homes.

at the opening of the fourth, rushed outside and scratched with their bird-claws every one who ran away. Women and children, however, they spared, generally also men who stood their ground and held out the backs of their wrists. If for any reason the camp was moved during the four-day period the Mosquitoes, mounted on horseback in full regalia, pursued and scratched every youth who was not a member of their society.

Although the Sarcee did not actually invent either this or their other societies, but borrowed it from some neighbour, almost certainly the Blackfoot, they themselves ascribed a local origin to it and bolstered up their belief with the following legend.

"A small Sarcee war-party was discovered by its enemies and forced to scatter. One man threw off his clothes to aid his escape. A swarm of mosquitoes began to attack him but their leader rebuked them, saying, "Do not touch my son." He then taught him the Mosquito society ritual and bade him fearlessly sting all non-members whether man, woman or child."

POGS

In this society were two leaders, two lariat owners, and four workers. The leaders wore a kind of poncho made from a red Hudson's Bay Company's blanket, which was lined with skin on the inside, with beads and weasel-skins on the outside, and fringed at the bottom with eagle feathers. It almost touched the ground behind, but in front barely covered the waist. This was the only garment they wore, apart from a breech-clout and moccasins; but they brought to the festival the two society pipes which were their chief badges of office.

The insignia of each lariat owner was a lariat made from the mane of the buffalo, and worn like a bandolier over the left shoulder with one long end trailing on the ground. That no one might step on this end they always danced behind the other members, who merely wore their finest clothes. Each man planted a bunch of owl feathers in his hair, painted with red his face, forearms, and legs, then encircled his face with a streak of blue and added two bands of the same colour around each wrist and ankle.

In the middle of the tent sat four old men holding four rattles that had been borrowed from the beaver bundle (See page 77); sometimes also four other old men to help in the singing. Beside them were dishes of meat or berry soup contributed to the society by women related to the members. At the opening of each song the two leaders led the "Dogs" in a dance around the old men, single file, while non-members looked in through the door; behind any member danced his wife, if she wished, holding the tail of his blanket. At the end of each dance they resumed their seats and smoked in turn from one of the large society pipes. The workers distributed the food at the close of the fourth dance, thus concluding the day's performance.

At the last two or three festivals of the Dog Society some of the members wore bonnets of buffalo hide that supported two upstanding buffalo horns and trailed a strip of skin decorated with three horizontal rows of feathers. This head-dress really belonged to a Blackfoot society, the Horn, which was well known to the Sarcee, but never adopted by them.

PAINTED RED

This society had four workers, but only one leader, whose insignia, carried in every dance, was the *miso'ti dis'oli*, "woolly pipe," wrapped in red flannel and eagle feathers. It had a stone bowl about 2 inches wide, decorated where it joined the wide wooden stem with red plumes, ribbons, and strips of weasel skin. Each member encircled his head, wrists, and ankles with strips of wolf skin, planted a goose feather on each side of his head, and painted a black band across his nose and cheeks and another around each wrist. The leader blackened, in addition, his lower jaw, and extended the patch upwards into two curling mustachios.

Four old men, with four drums, sat close to the four workers near the door of the tent. Each planted in the ground before him a stick to which was fastened bells, goose feathers, and a cluster of human hair. A few members too old to dance sat at the back of the tent, and the remainder lined the side walls.

As soon as the drummers began a song the members rose from their seats and danced toward the fire in the centre of the tent, then faced about and danced toward the walls. If any one kept his seat through shyness or other cause, one of the old men pulled out his stake and pointed it at him; then, if the man was still sitting at the end of the dance, he walked over and tore his blanket. They danced four times, with intervals for smoking; but toward the end of the fourth song they rushed outdoors and tore the blanket of any man they captured outside his tent. The victim who lost his temper received no compensation, but whoever showed no annoyance was given better clothes at the conclusion of the festival.

The police duties performed by the Painted Red society during the Sun Dance festival will be described in a later chapter. As usual, there was a legend to account for the society's origin; it ran as follows:

"Once when the Saree were moving their camp they left far behind them an orphan girl. In following their trail she passed close to a blackbird, which called to her "My daughter, come here." It then gave her this society, which she sold to a man for a very high price."

THOSE WHO MAKE OTHERS THEIR ASSOCIATES

This society closely resembled the preceding, Painted Red. Its members wore the same wolf-skin bands around the head, wrists, and ankles, and its leader (or leaders)¹ carried a black stone pipe wrapped in cloth. Faces and bodies were painted red, but each man bore two black streaks across his face, one on a level with the eyebrows and the other across the mouth. The leader wore (over the left shoulder, as always) a bandolier of tanned buffalo hide decorated with diagonal rows of beads, a fringe of elk toes along one edge, and four bells and four buffalo-tail pendants at the bottom.

The four old drummers, and the four workers, sat near the door, and the members danced inwards towards the fire, but did not turn around and dance toward the wall. Like the members of the Painted Red society, they ran outdoors after the fourth dance and tore the clothes of any man they found outside his tent.

¹Two informants said there were two leaders, two others claimed there was only one

The Sareee offered two different legends in explanation of this society. The first ran:

"Long before the coming of the white man our people were ravaged by small-pox. After many of them had died the survivors moved their camp, leaving behind by accident a small orphan boy. No sooner were they out of sight than the dead appeared to this boy, gave him a bundle containing a black pipe, and bade him organize a society among his people when he grew up."

The second legend was much fuller:

"A man whose wife had just died asked his father to make him a bow and arrows. The father summoned together all the men in the camp and instructed each one to make four or five arrows, reserving for his own hands the making of the bow. When they were finished the widower departed, telling his parents that he was lonely and intended to journey to the country whither his wife had gone. Travelling eastward, he came to a sand-mound marked with the emblems of various societies, and, on a flat spot near its centre, a ring of little stones surrounded with sand. The man laid his bow and arrows and his blanket on the south side of the ring, sat down facing the east, and filled his pipe; but before he could light it he saw, approaching from the east, a hunter driving a buffalo. Presently the stranger shot the buffalo with an arrow and laid out the animal ready for skinning; but in place of skinning it he mounted his horse and rode back over a hill. The traveller went over to look at the buffalo, but found only a little mouse pierced by an arrow. He left it there and, returning, sat down again beside the ring of stones. Soon the stranger reappeared and began to ride round the mound, for it was really a camp, and the circle of stones within it a chief's tent. In a loud voice he called 'Prepare yourselves, for a human being has come to visit us'; then he disappeared over the hill again. The traveller sat waiting, and as he waited he heard the rattle of dishes, although his eyes saw nothing; but looking behind him, he noticed a dish containing four white puff-balls, a white ball of grass-seed, a prairie onion, and a peculiar piece of coloured meat. An invisible host then addressed him saying, 'My son, if you eat all this food you will obtain your heart's desire.' The man ate everything; it tasted to him like buffalo meat. Immediately the camp was visible to his eyes. His host asked him 'My son, why have you come?' and he answered, 'Father, I was lonely for my wife, and I came to find her. She was dressed as I shall describe.' After he had described her dress his host said 'After four days and four nights, my son, you shall find her. Those four days and four nights we shall dance.' And his hostess added 'If you are asked what you would like to take back with you choose that black pipe hanging on the door. It belongs to the *nakottetupa* society. With it are two other things that give the people much joy, a beaded wheel and two arrows; they are for the young people. If you ask for anything else you will never recover your wife.' The woman then showed him how to play the beaded-wheel game, and the proper painting for the *nakottetupa* society.

Half the men in the camp danced that night, while the traveller watched them. He looked for his wife, but could not see her among the dancers. The next night the rest of the men danced; and still his wife was absent. On the third night half the women danced, and even yet his wife was not among them; but on the fourth night, when the rest of the women were dancing, his wife entered the tent, recognized her husband, and sat down beside him. His host then said 'You may take your wife home now but you must not look back.'

The man started out for his home but after sleeping three or four nights he looked behind him and immediately found himself back at his starting-point. The chief warned him 'If you look back four times you will have to go home alone. Moreover, never tell your wife that you wish she were a ghost again, for if you do she will come right back here.' The two started out again, and reached their home in safety; but for the rest of her life the woman neither blinked her eyelids nor closed them during sleep.

Now it happened one day that the man's people said to him, 'What is that you have brought back?' 'This is a black medicine-pipe,' he answered, 'that I received with my wife. I was told not to sell it for more or less than seven horses. I was given also a wheel and two arrows to use as a game. You have no games, so I will

show them to you.' That is how the wheel game originated, and the *mal-otwa-pot* society, whose leader is the owner of the black medicine-pipe.

The couple had seven children after their return. One night, however, a hunter came in from the chase and entered their tent. It filled with smoke, and the woman went outside to adjust its ears. She remained outside a long time without effecting any improvement, while her husband became more and more angry. He burst out as she re-entered, 'Why didn't you stay out all night? I wish you were a ghost.' That night the woman did become a ghost and left him."

BIRDS

There were two leaders and four workers in this society. Its members stripped to their breech-clouts and moccasins, keeping the latter untied, painted their faces and bodies red, and drew two black lines vertically across each eye and each corner of the mouth. On his back every man carried a water-bag made from a buffalo's bladder, and the leaders wore bear-skin belts and anklets. Thus arrayed, but covered with their blankets, they gathered in the tent set up by the four workers and prayed. Conducted then by their leaders outside the tent they arranged themselves in a circle on their blankets, their leaders on the west side facing east and the workers on the east side facing west. In the centre sat four old men, each beating a rattle borrowed from the beaver bundle on a dry buffalo hide stretched out in front of him. These old men then began to chant one of the society songs, and the "Birds" danced around them, while the people gathered near to watch. Disfigured persons were expected to keep aloof, because the *Dawn* was a timid bird and its impersonators would flee in terror to their tent if such a person approached.

Because the society did not share its food with the rest of the tribe, its members generally had to hunt during the festival to supply their personal needs. In that case, as soon as this first dance ended, its leaders led them on foot to the hunting field, leaving the old men in camp. If they failed to kill a buffalo they returned in silence to their tent; but if they succeeded, their leaders assigned to every man a back-load of meat, and, blowing whistles in the van, led them back triumphantly. The old men welcomed them by beating their rattles on the buffalo hides and chanting one of the society songs, while the "Birds" danced around them, each man carrying his pack. Because their burdens were heavy they danced around only once, after which they threw their packs inside the tent, filled their water-bags at the river, and returned to dance four times again, with intervals between each dance. Two men carried in their bags instead of water the blood of the buffalo. They now carried this inside the tent and handed it over to the workers, who set about preparing their meat; and after all had eaten, they again danced outside. So they continued during the four days of the festival.

Since the "Birds" might not ride on horseback during their festival they had to entrust their horses to relatives and march on foot if for any reason the tribe moved camp during that period.

To explain the society's origin the Sarcee relate a legend of the usual type:

'A woman who had been thrashed by her husband fled to a small lake and fell asleep at the water's edge. There the bird *Dawn* visited her and taught her the song and ritual for a new society. When she grew old she taught them to her eldest son who established them in the tribe."

CHAPTER VI THE SUN DANCE¹

Though the annual dances of the five societies offered a welcome break in the routine of Saree life, they paled into insignificance before the great festival of the Sun Dance, celebrated by the united tribe in August when the Saskatoon and other berries ripened. Like so many other of their customs, the Saree seem to have derived this festival from the Blackfoot, but at a period so remote that, having forgotten its real origin, they ascribed its introduction to the following myth:

"A young man who had an ugly scar on the side of his face fell in love with a certain woman, who promised to marry him if he succeeded in removing it. Accordingly he travelled away toward the sun and came to a camp, whose chief asked him what he wanted. 'I merely came on a visit,' he replied, and went on to another camp. There too he was asked what he wanted, and replied 'I am looking for some one who can remove this scar from my face.' 'We can do nothing with it,' the people answered. He received the same answer at the third camp. At the fourth Morning Star in the form of a boy came to him and asked him what he wanted; and again he replied, 'I want some one to remove this scar from my face.' Morning Star stayed with him for a while, then went back and said to his father, the Maker 'I have found a friend.' His father answered 'We do not want any human beings here'; but when the boy insisted, he consented to let him bring the young man to his home.

So the young Indian came to the lodge of the Maker. The Maker asked him what he wanted, and when the youth told him, he said 'Stay with us for a while.' He ordered the Indian to make four sweat-baths, and as soon as they were ready joined him inside them. When the youth emerged from the fourth bath his form was perfect. The Maker then seated him on one side, Morning Star on the other, and asked his wife which was her son. The woman hesitated for a long time and finally pointed to the Indian. 'How foolish you are' replied the Maker. 'The other is our son.'

The Maker now adopted the youth as his second son and detained him with them. He warned the two youths not to wander far away because the family was at war with the geese and the swans. One day the two youths wandered away to a slough, where the geese and swans attacked them. Morning Star shouted, 'Our enemies are pursuing us!'; but the young man caught up a stick and killed so many of the birds that the remainder fled. In recognition of his courage the Maker made him a scalp-lock shirt, painted his face as the owners of such shirts paint their faces to-day, and taught him certain songs. Meanwhile his wife piled in the middle of the tent everything she owned except a white buffalo-calf skin. The Maker observed this omission and said 'I want only the white calf-skin'; and when his wife laid down the white calf-skin he placed the scalp-lock shirt on top of it. The old woman then chanted a song of praise over her adopted son. At its conclusion the Maker laid a row of white sage out to the door of the tent for the youth to step on, and bade him do likewise whenever he transferred the scalp-lock shirt to another Indian.

Now they sent the youth home to his people. Just as he was leaving Morning Star said to him 'My friend, give me the woman who refused you. I shall watch over you and hear every word you say.' The youth returned to the grandmother with

¹Dr. P. E. Goddard has published an incomplete and rather confused account of the Saree Sun Dance, in *Anth. Papers, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, vol. 16, 1915-1921, pp. 273-282.

whom he had lived before his journey, but the old woman did not recognize him. 'It is I, your grandson' he said to her. 'Why do you stare at me so much?'

As he stood outside his tent that evening he saw the woman who had refused him standing outside her tent, whereupon he turned round and went indoors. She came to his lodge soon afterwards, and he told her to accompany him out to the prairie. They climbed a high hill together, and, standing on its summit, the youth called 'My friend, here is the woman you wanted.' Immediately Morning Star came down and stood beside them. 'Close your eyes,' he ordered, and they all ascended into the sky.

The youth is now the Evening Star. It was he who brought to mankind the scalp-lock shirt and the Sun Dance."

Strictly speaking, the Sun Dance was not an annual festival, because it could only be held in fulfilment of a woman's voluntary vow. Nevertheless, the Saree seem to have celebrated one every year from at least the middle of the nineteenth century until some time after they occupied their present reserve near Calgary. The entire festival covered a period of 9 days: during the first four the tribe moved in easy stages to the chosen site; on the fifth it built the Sun Dance lodge; and during the 4 succeeding days it "danced." Occasionally it lingered at the site a day or two longer to indulge in further entertainments, but the festival proper ended on the ninth day. Its leading actors were:

- (1) The Sun Dance woman, i.e., the woman who had vowed to hold the festival, and her husband.
- (2) The "mother" and "father" of this couple, i.e., the woman who had held the last Sun Dance, and her husband.
- (3) Two young men who had vowed to "take the buffalo's head," i.e., to build the sweat-houses, keep the fires, drive off the dogs, and perform certain other necessary labours; also their instructors, the two men who had performed the same duties at the preceding Sun Dance.
- (4) An old man chosen as "confessor" by the husband of the Sun Dance woman, on account of his knowledge of the ritual.
- (5) A man who had vowed to fast, and his instructor, the man who had fasted at the previous festival.
- (6) Braves who had vowed to undergo torture.
- (7) Women who had vowed to eat of the sacred buffalo tongues.
- (8) The members of the Painted Red Society, who policed the camp during the festival.

Only a married woman, free from all taint of infidelity, might vow to give a Sun Dance, and then only during her first marriage, or, if her husband had died after she had given already one or more Sun Dances, during her second marriage. Occasionally a woman gave three or four during her lifetime, receiving greater honour from each one. She could make her vow on any occasion that gave rise to anxiety or danger, and at any season of the year before midsummer. The illness of a kinsman, or his absence on the war-path, offered the most usual pretext. She rose up before the crowd gathered in the sick man's tent and said "Pray for me, I beseech you, for I intend to give a Sun Dance in the summer if my kinsman recovers." The news spread quickly from camp to camp, and other Indians publicly vowed to undertake certain rôles at the forthcoming festival, on grounds similar to those of its giver. The whole tribe palpitated with an air of expectancy, and every family examined and overhauled its wardrobe.

Within a few hours of her declaration the husband of the Sun Dance woman called an old man into his tipi, handed him a pipe, and invited him to become the confessor. The old man held the pipe over a smudge of white sage, pointed it north, east, south, and west, and finally lit it. Both men then smoked, after which they carried or led the sick man outside his tent to face the east, and the old man called out "So and so (naming the woman) has promised to give a Sun Dance next summer if this her kinsman recovers. If she has lived purely all her days may he recover quickly, but if she is not pure may he die."¹ Leading the patient inside again he advised the woman to call in the giver of the last Sun Dance, the owner of the ceremonial head-dress that she would purchase and wear during the festival.²

Summoned by a messenger the previous Sun Dance woman now entered the tipi and received a pipe filled with tobacco, but not lit. After praying over it she handed it to the patient, who puffed it four times and handed it to the new Sun Dance woman and her husband. When they in turn had prayed over it they passed it to some man to light. He took it by the bowl, held it twice over the smudge and pointed it northward and eastward; then, taking it by the mouthpiece, he held it twice again over the smudge and pointed it southward and westward. Finally he lit it, and every one smoked. Just before the gathering dispersed kinsmen smeared the patient's face and body with dark red paint, which they renewed from time to time until he recovered. From this date onward a smudge of white sage burned continually in the Sun Dance woman's lodge, no dogs were allowed within, and no loud noise in the vicinity, but at frequent intervals the old Sun Dance woman visited her to teach her what she had to do.

With the coming of summer the scattered camps reunited, pitched their tents in a circle around the lodge of the chief, and directed all their energies to the buffalo hunt. To the tipi of the Sun Dance woman, advanced a little in front of the rest, the hunters brought all the buffalo tongues, which her husband heaped together on a clean robe preliminary to drying. To cut them open he hired two old women who had partaken of the sacred tongues at a previous Sun Dance. They slit each tongue down to its base, taking care not to puncture a hole in either half, since this would be regarded as a sign of unchastity; a pure woman, the Indians believed, could be quite careless, but the Maker himself caused the hand of the impure woman to slip, however cautiously she worked. Two tongues, with the hair still clinging to their bases, they set on one side for ritual eating by the women who had vowed to partake of them; the remainder they stored in parfleches for general consumption during the festival.

As soon as he had stored one hundred dried tongues in his tent, sometimes even before he had obtained that number, the Sun Dance woman's

¹If the man died the woman's vow ceased to be binding, and the Indians suspected her of secret infidelity.

²This head dress, which could only be worn at a Sun Dance, has now disappeared. Its last Saree owner, Nancy, who died in 1911, believed that none of her tribeswomen were strictly chaste, and, therefore, bequeathed it to a Miss Hodgson (later Mrs. Hill), whose mother was half Saree and half French-Canadian, and whose father was the white stockman on the reserve. What became of it later is not known. Except at the Sun Dance it was always wrapped in a deer skin, and a digging-stick that had originally belonged to the beaver medicine bundle (See p. 77) was fastened to the outside. Evidently the Sun Dance head-dress was closely connected with the beaver bundle, for if its owner happened to be absent in another tribe, the wife of the beaver bundle owner could take her place at the Sun Dance and substitute the head-dress she wore in the beaver ritual.

husband presented some tobacco to the chief, who cut it up, called in the old men to share its smoking, and in open council fixed a date for the festival. At the same time the woman's husband distributed tobacco throughout the camp and formally requested the Indians not to scatter, because the hour of the Sun Dance was drawing near.

At last the day came when the chief issued the proclamation "Prepare to move to the Sun Dance site." Early the next morning the Indians broke camp; the two workers (the young men who had vowed to perform all the chores) saddled and attached the travois to the horses of the Sun Dance woman and her family, placing all the tongues in one travois, the chief temporarily abdicated his place, and the woman's husband led the cavalcade, followed by his wife and the rest of the tribe. About mid-afternoon the procession halted, and the workers erected a sweat-lodge of willows, facing the east as usual, and with a square hole for its twenty-four stones; behind this hole they kindled a smudge of white sage, and at the back of the lodge, on the piled-up earth, laid a large pipe filled with tobacco. When the stones were hot an old man called out "Come, all who wish to enter the sweat-lodge." Slowly a small procession drew near. In front were the old and the new Sun Dance women, "mother" and "daughter," their heads covered by their blankets. Beside them walked the confessor, and, behind, their husbands, the husband of the new Sun Dance woman wearing a blanket that carried in the middle of the back a painted disk representing the sun. These five took their places at the back of the sweat-lodge, and as many old men as could crowd within sat around the sides.

Now the Sun Dance woman took up the pipe from the back of the lodge, and, followed by her "mother," walked around the north side and handed it to one of the old men. He held it up and prayed over it, then handed it back. She made a gesture as if he were conferring a blessing on her, and passed it on to one of the workers, who lit it and returned it, through her, to the old man. The two women then resumed their places alongside their husbands, and the pipe circulated from hand to hand.

The workers lowered the curtain when every one had smoked and passed in water to pour on the hot stones. Amid the dense cloud of steam that filled the lodge an old man beseeched the Maker to bestow long life, health, and prosperity on the Sun Dance woman and her husband, on each old man inside the lodge, and on every person in the camp. During his prayer the other men intoned a special song, and at its conclusion ejaculated with one voice *e-i*. Some one then poured more water on the stones and a second man prayed in much the same manner. After four or five had prayed, first the front then the back curtain was raised to lower the temperature and let in fresh air. Four times it was raised and lowered before the last man had offered up his prayer. The gathering then dispersed, but as the five principal actors retired to their tents the confessor led the Sun Dance woman to one side to receive her confession. She attested her fidelity to her husband, revealed any overtures she had rejected before or after her marriage, and even recalled to memory any occasion when she had exposed her body, while bathing, to the gaze of another woman. Confession brought immediate absolution; actually there was no question of her purity, since fear of the Maker effectively deterred every unchaste woman from vowing to celebrate a Sun Dance.

From this day until the festival ended the chief withdrew his tent from the centre of the circle toward its circumference and yielded the place of honour to the Sun Dance woman and her husband. They now slept on opposite sides of their tent, and the woman fasted, neither eating nor drinking during the day, and at night taking only four mouthfuls of food and four of water. It, overcome with thirst, she drank more than this quantity, the Indians believed that heavy rain would fall for 4 days and 4 nights, thereby delaying the festival and compelling her to fast all the longer.

The Painted Red society, detailed to police the camp during the festival, now pitched its tent near the tent of the chief. Somewhere in the circumference the Indians joined two tents together so that the old men and some of the women could practise special Sun Dance songs.

On the second and third days the tribe again moved camp and repeated the first day's ceremony, but on the fourth, when it finally reached the appointed site, it erected the sweat-lodge with more ceremony. The workers now called for one hundred sticks to build its frame, one hundred stones for its fireplace, and a buffalo skull, painted half red, half black, with white sage in the eye-sockets, to place on the pile of earth at the back. A score or more young men, therefore, went out to gather the sticks, and each rode around the camp, singing, before he laid his contribution on the lodge site. At evening the chief marched out in front of his tent and cried "Let us hasten on with the Sun Dance, for the woman is still fasting."

On the fifth day, at sunrise, the men began to erect the great Sun Dance lodge. Some dug the post-holes, others brought in the ten or twelve posts,¹ each forked at its upper end. No sooner were these stamped into place than two or three scouts went out to find a suitable centre-pole, which had to be "captured" and brought in with all the formality attending the capture of a prisoner. While they were absent a number of old warriors, each carrying a drum, piled a heap of manure outside the camp and arranged themselves in line behind it. The scouts located a tree, marked it by breaking off a branch and fastening it to the trunk, and rode homeward, zigzagging, and shouting a war-whoop every time they crossed their trail. The moment they came into view the warriors beat their drums and sang; and when at last the scouts halted near them, one old man stepped forward, recounted four brave deeds, and scattered the manure with his feet.² Immediately the others scrambled to seize a flying piece, believing that the successful man would surely capture a horse the next time he went out on the war-path. The scouts and warriors then re-entered the camp, and gathered together young and old, men and women, to bring in the centre-pole. Half a dozen men only remained behind to dig for it a hole.

The "capture" of the centre-pole was the most joyous and colourful event in the Saree year. Dressed in their finest clothes, the Indians marched out from the camp, some on horseback, some on foot. Girls mounted behind their sweethearts, or on horses of their own; and two

¹The Saree held their last Sun Dance about 1890, and my informants had forgotten the exact number of posts.

²Kicking manure signified that the speaker had told nothing but the truth.

young braves occasionally bestrode the same horse. Two men carried axes to chop down the tree, others firearms to shoot at it when it fell; but before the first stroke was applied an old warrior stepped forward and related his four brave deeds, while the axmen pointed their weapons at the trunk. After they had trimmed the limbs from the fallen tree and adjusted ropes around its trunk horsemen and footmen crowded around, lifted it from the ground and carried it through the air for a few yards. Then they dragged it to the camp, women vying with men in hauling on the ropes. In front, and on each side, pranced the mounted girls and men, one of whom galloped behind the pole from time to time and fired a gun at it. Not until they had brought it to rest beside its hole did the shouting and yelling die away.

Amid all this excitement the Sun Dance woman and her husband rested quietly in the camp; but now, while others prepared to erect the centre-pole and complete the lodge, her relatives drove all her horses to her tent that her confessor might pray over them, and her "parents," the former Sun Dance woman and her husband, brought over the head-dress that they were transferring. The mother covered her daughter's face with red paint; the father painted the face and body of his son, daubing him all over with red paint, then drawing black streaks across his forehead, around his chin, around his shoulders, and across his chest and back, and finally planting a single black daub squarely in the middle of his nose, all the while chanting two songs, one for the red paint and the other for the black. The mother then taught her daughter certain everyday duties, such as how to erect a tipi and to fasten a travois on a horse; and the father similarly instructed his son. Not until all these rituals were ended did the father plant a crow's feather over his son's forehead, and the mother place on her daughter's head the sacred Sun Dance head-dress, and give into her hands the digging-stick that symbolized the walking-stick she might hope to use in her old age, and which she actually used as a walking-stick throughout the festival. Before its 4 days' ended the new Sun Dance woman and her husband paid a heavy price for these sacred objects, which henceforth passed into their possession.

Simultaneous with this ceremony in the Sun Dance woman's tent, was a ceremony in the tent of the two workers, who received instruction from their predecessors in exactly the same way, and for a corresponding price. Each had his blanket tied around his waist, a crow's feather planted over his forehead, and his face and body smeared with the same patterns in red and black paint as the husband of the Sun Dance woman.

After the transfer of the head-dress came the ritual eating of the buffalo tongues, carried out a few yards away within a conical enclosure of branches interrupted by a wide entrance. The two workers carried the *parlèches* of buffalo tongues inside this enclosure, around which soon gathered a crowd of Indians. Then from the tent of the Sun Dance woman came a solemn procession; in front marched the husbands, behind them the women, father preceding son and mother daughter. Beside the daughter walked the confessor, who halted the train four times to hear her confession. As soon as they entered the enclosure the Sun Dance woman lay down, rested her head on the bags of buffalo tongues, and prayed "I have given this Sun Dance for my kinsmen, for my children

and for my grandchildren. I have always been faithful to my husband. If my confession is not true may the Maker punish me, but if it is true may he bless me and my kinsmen, and grant that I reach old age." At the close of her prayer she sat up, the confessor opened the bags, and the women who had vowed to partake of the sacred tongues stepped forward. Each swallowed a small portion of her tongue¹ and distributed the remainder among her kinsfolk in order that they also might share her blessing. Thus she publicly attested her purity and obtained the favour of the Maker; but if she lied, so the Indians believed, either she or a relative was sure to die soon afterwards.

One *particêche* contained a fresh buffalo hide, which the confessor now spread out on the ground in front of him so that an old warrior might recount four war deeds over it. The workers then cut it into lashings for fastening the "nest" to the centre-pole. This led to another procession: the father and mother took their places in front, the daughter and son behind, each carrying a whistle made from the wing bone of an eagle; and all four, closely followed by the confessor, marched over to the hole where the centre-pole lay. The Sun Dance woman lifted her foot toward it four times, not touching it until the fourth movement; then her husband sat on its upper end, his three companions shook it, all four blew their whistles, and the people round about raised the war-whoop. After four shakings the man sprang off, leaving his blanket in the fork or nest at its top. Immediately a number of Indians pressed forward to pray at this nest, and to leave in it offerings of moccasins, cloth, and other articles. Some of the men then hoisted the pole into place, while others raised the war-whoop again.

The two women and their husbands now withdrew to the back of the sweat-lodge, where the Sun Dance woman for the last time repeated her confession. All five then entered, carrying bunches of white sage to wipe away the perspiration, and the three men sang and prayed in turn. This sweat-bath marked the end of the Sun Dance woman's rôle. She might break her fast immediately; and though she wore her head-dress throughout the remainder of the festival, she played no prominent part in the proceedings but mingled freely with the crowd. The painted buffalo skull that had rested at the back of each successive sweat-lodge remained undisturbed behind the last one and was never employed again.

The withdrawal of the Sun Dance woman and her husband did not interfere with the completion of the lodge. The men put in place the rafters, long poles that stretched from the nest of the centre-pole to the forks of the peripheral posts. Half a dozen or so then remained in camp while the rest of the tribe rode out over the plain to gather branches. Singly or in pairs they returned, singing, and lined up at a distance from the lodge, with the men in front and the women and girls behind. Then, chanting the special "raising of the Sun Dance wall song," they slowly marched to the lodge and deposited their branches, which the men who had remained behind quickly draped between the posts and over the rafters. With the building of this wall the fifth day's proceedings came to an end.

¹Only two tongues were used in the ritual. If there were only two women, each received a whole tongue; if more than two (as was usual) each received a portion of a tongue.

The sixth morning saw the construction of two roofless shelters within the Sun Dance lodge, one, just to the right of the entrance, for the braves who had vowed to undergo torture, the other, at the back of the lodge, for the man who had vowed to fast. Before the latter were placed two buffalo skulls, one on each side of the door. Here the faster was decorated for a price by his "father," the man who had fasted at the preceding festival. His face and body were plastered with yellow ochre, and each shoulder, elbow, and wrist, and the middles of the forehead, breast, and back, bore a half-circle in dark red paint to represent the new moon. From his hair rose two eagle feathers, a fillet of twisted juniper encircled his forehead, a whistle was suspended from his neck, and a short string dangling at its end and an eagle feather hung from each little finger. His only garment was a blanket, tightly wrapped around his waist.

About four o'clock in the afternoon four old men, each carrying a drum, mustered all the children east of the camp-circle, where they formed a procession, the old men in front symbolizing courage, the children purity. Beating their drums and chanting the opening song they marched towards the lodge, but on the way they halted and raised the war-whoop four times, the last time at the entrance. The whole tribe then streamed in behind them, the faster came out of his tent and entered his shelter, and the braves who had elected to undergo torture made their way to their appointed hut.¹ At the back, to the right of the faster's shelter, sat the chiefs and old men smoking; on the other side of the shelter were a number of old men with drums; and between these old men and the braves' hut gathered the women and children. The warriors of the tribe grouped themselves on the opposite side of the lodge, and from time to time performed grass dances about some singers who squatted before a large drum; but many of the younger men leaned on poles near the entrance, or, mounted on horseback, watched the proceedings from without (See Figure 5).

The festivities lasted from late afternoon until daylight the next morning. Throughout all these hours chief interest centred on the braves voluntarily undergoing torture in fulfilment of vows they had made in times of stress or danger. Unless they numbered more than four, each submitted to the ordeal on a separate night. While a youth fastened to the top of the centre-pole two long thongs whose ends trailed on the ground below,² the victim stripped to his breech-clout inside his shelter, tied white sage around his head, wrists, and ankles, and lay on his back in front of the entrance. There two old warriors who themselves had submitted to the torture on some previous occasion covered his face, body, and limbs with white clay, and after one of them had kneaded the flesh over each lung and drawn it up with his fingers, the other pressed a stick against it and punctured it with a steel arrowhead, working the instrument backwards and forwards to enlarge the hole. Sometimes the surgeon would ask of his victim, or of kin-men who stood near, whether the incision should be deep or shallow; but he was in no way bound by

¹Sometimes the braves postponed their exhibition until the following day.

²One spotted, an old man who had fasted at the last Sun Dance the Sacree held, said that during his youth he had climbed the pole and attached the thongs. Four braves had submitted to torture that evening, and he had been forced to cling to the top of the pole all night, and part of the next day, until their dances ended and he received orders to cast off the thongs.

their wishes, and, indeed, if they said "Make a shallow incision" he might scorn their weakness and cut deeply. Into each hole he inserted a wooden peg, over which he looped the end of one of the two thongs. The brave then rose to his feet, gripped the thongs in his hands, and jerked heavily against them, twice to each side, yelling loudly to evince

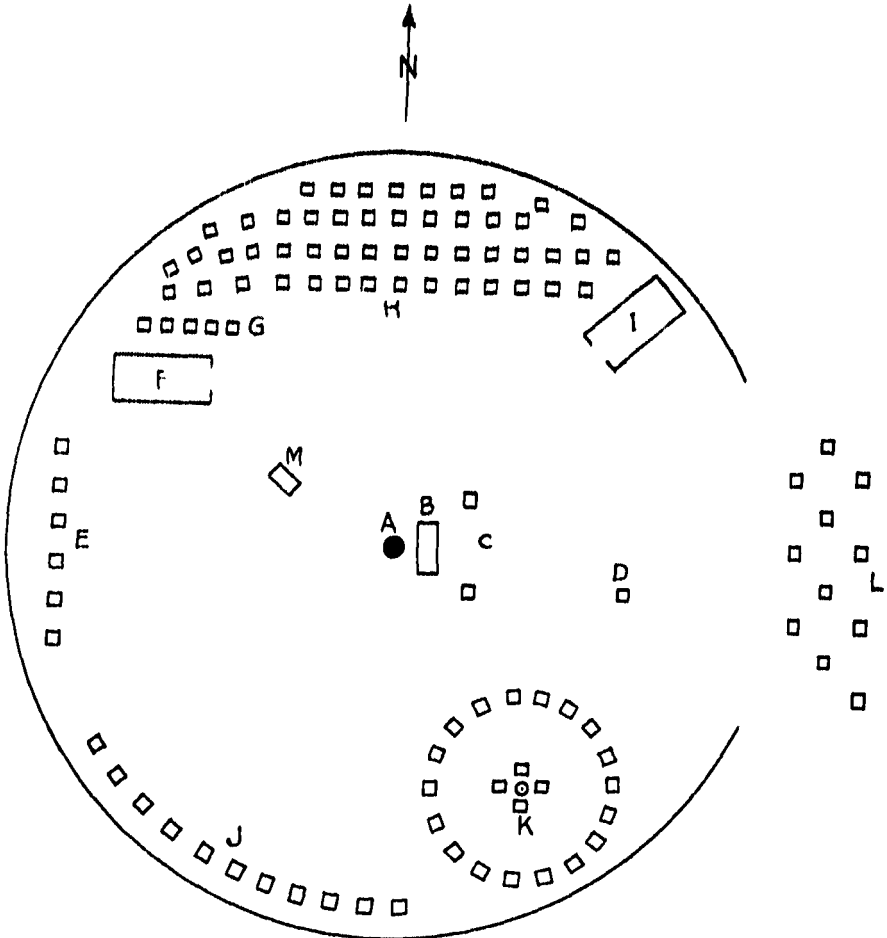


Figure 5. Sketch plan of the Sun Dance. (A) centre-pole; (B) fireplace; (C) two warriors proclaiming their war deeds; (D) warrior dramatizing his war deeds; (E) chiefs and old men, smoking; (F) hut of fasters; (G) old men with drums; (H) women and children; (I) hut of braves; (J) men; (K) men dancing around drummers; (L) youths on horseback; (M) smudge.

his courage. If a thong broke, or tore out the flesh, the surgeon immediately cut away the other thong and released him from further torture; but this rarely happened. In most cases, after he had tested his thongs, he advanced to the centre-pole, flung his arms around it, and silently prayed for courage; then he walked back until the thongs drew taut

again, and, straining backward, danced up and down while the old men beat their drums and the people sang. As soon as he tore one thong loose he lay down on his face to be released from the other, and, with a prayer to the Maker, buried the shreds of torn flesh at the base of the centre-pole. Should neither thong have broken away at the end of several songs a kinsman came to his aid and jerked him sharply backward by the shoulders; but even this sometimes failed, and he continued to suffer torment, while a cold stream of perspiration drenched his body. Finally an old warrior would take pity on him, and, advancing with uplifted knife to the centre of the lodge, cry aloud "With this knife I slew my enemy. Now I demand the release of this brave." The men who had bound him were then obliged to cut him free and let him withdraw to his hut to recuperate.¹

The man who had vowed to fast underwent a far milder ordeal, for the sole object of his fasting was to obtain a vision from the supernatural world. He was, therefore, confined to his shelter during the 4 days of the festival, and forbidden all food and drink except a very small amount each morning after the people had retired to rest.² No one might enter the shelter, and no one speak to him, except the faster of the previous Sun Dance, who acted as his instructor and visited him every morning. To dispel the taint of human beings so displeasing to the animal world from which he expected to receive his vision a smudge of juniper bushes burned continually in a shallow, rectangular pit between his lodge and the centre-pole, and the instructor wrapped a blanket over his head, and over the food and water he carried, whenever he visited the hut. This food and water the faster had to be offered four times before he might accept. From the vision that came to him he acquired a new Sun Dance song, which he revealed to his instructor, and through him, to the old men who drummed and sang at the side of the shelter. Then, in the evening, when the festivities recommenced, these old men listened while the faster sang it; and as soon as they could repeat it correctly they took up the tune so that the faster might dance. Thus he carried out his part until the conclusion of the festivities, when he emerged from his shelter and resumed his ordinary life.

The incidents thus far described constituted the fixed program, as it were, of every Sun Dance, inasmuch as all the principal actors—the Sun Dance woman and her entourage, the workers, the eaters of the sacred buffalo tongues, the tortured braves, and the faster—had publicly vowed several weeks or months before to perform their respective rôles. Over and above these, however, numerous unheralded episodes lent colour to the scene. Now a warrior bearing a bundle of sticks would march to the central fireplace and proclaim his four brave deeds, emphasizing each one by hurling a few brands into the flames; to enhance his glory relatives then distributed blankets and other gifts among the poorer members of the tribe. Another warrior in full battle attire might take up his station

¹An old man, Running in the Middle, stated that during his ordeal a stout, heavily built woman tried in vain to release him by pulling on his shoulders with her full weight. Just as he was fainting the man who had bound him cut his thongs andress freed him back to his hut.

²At the last Soree Sun Dance the instructor brought food and water to the faster, One Spotted, in the evening instead of in the morning. Why he thus reversed the usual procedure One Spotted did not know.

between the entrance and the fireplace, line up his friends with levelled guns to represent his foes, and dramatically enact his victories. At some pause in the dancing, again, an old man would lead out a youth who had distinguished himself in battle, confer on him a new name,¹ and exhort him to strive after greater glory. So incident followed incident in constant succession, and the only uneventful hours were those when the Indians were resting. We cannot wonder, therefore, that the Santee looked forward to their Sun Dance as the brightest episode in their year, and that volunteers were seldom lacking to undertake the principal rôles.

¹ Generally the name of some relative who had recently died, or who had discarded the name some years earlier.
² The old man received no payment for his goodwill.

CHAPTER VII

GRASS DANCES

Younger than the Sun Dance just described was an organization, mainly social, but in one of its aspects religious, which the Saree sometimes called the "Sioux Dance," because they believed it reached them through the Blackfoot from the Sioux, and sometimes by its Blackfoot name *Kaspa*. Actually it was a form of the Grass Dance that spread so widely among the tribes of the North American plains. It reached the Saree, apparently, about 1880. Eight years later some visiting Blackfoot Indians brought about its modification, and in 1900 it was combined with the women's Circle Dance that had just been introduced from the same quarter. It thus passed through three stages of development, an early, a middle, and a late.

EARLY PERIOD

In its early form the Grass Dance generally occurred during the Sun Dance, though it could be held in or out of doors at any time of the year. It began late in the afternoon, either inside a tent, or outdoors within a circular compound made of branches. The chiefs and principal warriors sat in the place of honour at the back of the tent or compound, the men who were to participate in the dance lined the two sides, and a pot of berry soup occupied the centre. To the right of the entrance (looking in) six men sat around a big drum whose membrane was made at first of buffalo hide, later of deer skin; and on the opposite side of the entrance were four owners of wooden swords, the principal dancers. A crowd of women and children peered through the opening, but were not permitted inside the enclosure.

Whenever the six drummers beat their drum and sang, one or more of the sword men rose to dance. Immediately all the others in the compound except the chiefs and old warriors joined the dance, which was a kind of caper round and round, one man following another. Youths making their debut for the first time sometimes held back, fearing that the crowd of onlookers might laugh at them; but they too had to join in when one of the sword men vigorously beat their legs. It happened on one or two occasions that the son of some wealthy man stayed away altogether from the dance; but even that was of no avail, for the four sword men went out and arrested him, haled him in to the dance, and fined his father a blanket or clothes.

Normally the drummers chanted one long song four times and ceased, when the dancers could sit down and rest; but often in their excitement they chanted one song after another until the dancers almost fell from exhaustion. At intervals between the songs the sword men distributed the berry soup, and some old warrior carrying a stick strung with four horse-tails narrated four of his war deeds. An old man, or a drummer, sometimes arrested the progress of a dance by calling out "You people, inside and outside, keep quiet and listen to the woman's voice in the drum." The drummers then sang a special song four times, and at the

fourth rendition lowered their voices, when the Indians believed they heard the echo of a woman's voice a note or two behind the men's.

The drum itself resembled a European kettle-drum; it was about 2½ feet in diameter and 1 foot deep, with a membrane on both faces. A broad yellow band divided the upper membrane into two parts, one of which was covered with dark blue, the other with dark red, flannel. Similar flannel muffled the sticks. In use the drum was suspended 3 or 4 inches above the ground by loops that fitted over the forked ends of four pickets strung with brass bells, bunches of horse-tail, feathers, and weasel skins.

The principal functionaries in the dance were clearly the sword owners. They could sell their swords as readily as other paraphernalia, but only during the Grass Dance. The purchaser occupied a seat in the tent or compound beside the seller, and at a pause between two songs changed clothes with him. The two men then danced four times around the enclosure, one behind the other, to the beat of a special song, the seller preceding and carrying the sword during the two first circuits, the purchaser during the two last. Meanwhile kinsmen of the purchaser piled clothes to the conventional value of the sword in the centre of the compound, and any man who contributed to the pile from his own stock was entitled to dance behind the two principals. As soon as the dance ended the seller led out an old man from the back, stationed him beside the purchaser in front of the drummers, and called on him to narrate four of his war deeds; at the close of each narrative the people shouted and the drummers smote their drum. The new owner then occupied the seat of his predecessor, who found a place somewhere or other among the dancers.

MIDDLE PERIOD

About 1888 some Blackfoot visitors brought much new paraphernalia for the Grass Dance, including porcupine-quill head-dresses, never before worn by the Sarcee; and the latter paid many horses for them, even when there were two or more objects of the same kind. They were then obliged to modify their dance in order that the owners of these new objects might display them and dance to the special songs that accompanied their use. Accordingly, the ceremony now opened with songs to which the entire company danced, proceeded in regular order through the list of individual songs and dances, and closed with general ones again. Below is the list

Article	Number of owners	Number of songs
Feather belts . . .	1	1
Big drum . . .	1	1
Mirror and wooden gun ¹ . . .	1	1
Swords . . .	3 or 4	1
Crow-collars . . .	2	1
Whistles . . .	2	1
Eagle-feather belts . . .	2 or 3	1
Tomahawk pipe . . .	2	1
Feathers on beaded belt . . .	2	1
Calf-skin leggings, hair head-dress, and stick ² . . .	1	1
Whips . . .	2	1
Dog-feast stick . . .	1	1
Pipe-stem . . .	1	1

¹These two objects went together, the mirror being worn on the chest

²This was the special paraphernalia for the leader of the Grass Dance

of the new articles that were introduced, arranged in the order in which their owners danced.

The four owners of feather belts, who had four songs in common, danced together in one place during their first two songs, at the third they ceremoniously removed their belts from the wall of the hall or tent and fastened them around their waists; and at the fourth they danced around the room, two in one direction and two in the other. All other performers merely danced around four times. There was an interlude after the performance by the owner of the mirror and wooden gun during which the sword men distributed food.

When the owners of these various articles had completed their dances special songs were chanted for certain other individuals, who rose and danced in the following order:

Giving away a horse. In the course of this dance the performer threw a stick or a door to represent the horse he was "throwing away."

Wounded warrior

Warrior who had been surrounded by his enemies but had escaped

Warrior who had captured a scalp.

"Cut-ropes song," for a man who had stolen a horse

Such, in general outline, was the Grass Dance during the middle period of its development, though the performances were often interrupted by the sale of one or more of the ceremonial articles. The procedure at such transfers scarcely varied, so that the sale of a whistle will serve as an example. The drummers started up a special "transfer" song, during which the four belt-owners, followed by the sword men, danced four times around the inside of the hall or tent, marched once around its outside, then approached the purchaser, whom a sword man led by the hand to the seller of the whistle that the two might exchange clothes. The drummers now chanted the whistle song, whereupon the seller and purchaser danced four circuits, the former leading throughout. Whenever they reached the east side of the tent they blew the whistle, the seller twice, then the purchaser twice; after which they resumed their seats, the purchaser retaining the whistle.

Once a year, on the average, there occurred in connection with a Grass Dance a special ritual called the Dog Feast, never held except in fulfilment of a vow for some one's recovery from sickness. Yet it was not the vower who conducted the ritual, but the owner of the ceremonial dog-feast stick, the stick adorned with beads and feathers that has been listed already. Whether the feast was once independent of the Grass Dance or had always been an integral part of it, the Sareee did not know, but they believed that it came to them from the Blood Indians about the end of the nineteenth century.

"A certain Blood medicine-man named 'He who goes in front' fell ill and died. Before he expired he told his people to leave his body unburied for four days. While he lay dead in his tent a dog visited him and said 'You shall come to life again, and hereafter every Indian who is at the point of death shall recover if he promises to perform the ritual I shall now show you'. The dog then taught him how to hold a dog feast and the medicine-man came to life again."

The last dog feast took place in 1913. The man who conducted the ritual on that occasion, John Whitney, gave the following account of the ceremony.



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The beaded stick carried by the leader of the dog-feast song

The vower of the feast killed the smallest pup he could find, threw away the skin, and boiled the meat in a pot which he carried inside the dance-hall and placed on the floor behind the central sweet-grass fire. All the men (and, in later days, the women also) took their usual places for the Grass Dance, but the owner of the dog-feast stick (Plate VI, page 61) occupied a seat immediately to the left of the door next to the drummers. The performance that he normally presented at a Grass Dance was now expanded into six movements. The first was his usual dance four times around the hall, imitating a prairie chicken or other creature; but the five succeeding ones, each of which called for a special song, constituted the real dog feast.

He began by dancing for a time beside the door, then, when the drummers quickened the time of their song, moved in a sunwise direction toward the pot, brandishing the stick like a spear. Three feints he made with it; at the fourth, he dipped it into the vessel and pointed it toward the north, the east, the south, and the west. Turning to one of the four old men who sat at the back of the hall he made three passes, and at the fourth placed the tip of the stick on the old man's tongue. He then returned to his seat for a minute, and, when the drummers revived the song, repeated the performance with the three other old men in turn. Thus closed his second movement, the first of the dog feast proper.

The drummers opened the third movement with another song, whereupon the dog-stick owner dragged some man or other towards the pot, held a piece of the dog-meat above his head, and made him jump for it four times like a dog. At the fourth leap he dropped the meat into the man's mouth.

During the fourth song he distributed the rest of the meat among the entire company, when each man before eating uttered a silent prayer of this general type: "Maker, I ask for my-self, my family and my tribe long life, more clothing, more money and more horses. Keep me out of danger and grant me your help." All the bones were then thrown back into the pot except the skull, which was laid on the ground between the pot and the fire.

At the termination of this ritual meal the drummers commenced another song during which every man stood with uplifted hands. As the last notes died away he howled *ho ho* like a dog, dropped his hands, and sat down.

Now the drummers began the sixth and final song. The old man who had first tasted the stick danced around to the leader, took from him his ceremonial stick, and, imitating the capture of a horse, or the taking of a scalp, made four circuits of the hall, touching the skull with the stick at each circuit. When he had retired to his place the other three old men performed similar dances; then each in turn brandished the stick in the direction to which his narrative referred and proclaimed his four brave deeds. With this ending of the dog feast the Grass Dance pursued its normal course; but after the gathering had dispersed the man who had vowed to give the feast removed the pot of bones and the skull and hung them in a tree as a thankoffering to the Maker.

In the first decade of the twentieth century the Sareee developed an aversion to the eating of dog's flesh. At their last three dog feasts, therefore, they omitted the third movement (when the leader dropped a piece of meat into a man's mouth), and modified the fourth by hiding their portions of meat behind them.

LATE PERIOD

About 1900 the Blackfoot introduced the Sareee to the movements and paraphernalia of the "Circle" dance, *klatsinata*, a dance exclusively for women, which the Sareee immediately combined with their Grass Dance to produce what they called the Sioux-Circle Dance. They held this in winter within a regular dance-hall, but in summer out of doors within an enclosure made by their wagons, or by planting trees in a circle and lining them with canvas. A visit from Indians of another tribe always provided a suitable pretext; but the dance could not occur except on the invitation of the husband of a woman who possessed an eagle-feather head-dress, and ranked, accordingly, as a leader in the Circle Dance. The Sareee have owned in some years four of these head-dresses, in other years only two. Each was a half-moon of eagle tail-feathers, stained red at their tips, rising up from a beaded head-band from which dangled over each ear a train of similar feathers and the skin of a weasel. The husband of one of these head-dress owners announced the date of the celebration, and a day or two beforehand purchased a supply of bread, fruit, tea, and other goods from the stores in Calgary. With the help of friends and kinsmen on the morning of the appointed day he prepared the dance-hall or enclosure while his wife and other women cooked the necessary food. Then, toward sunset, the owner of the big drum entered the hall with his instrument, which two or three men pounded for a few minutes as a signal to dress.

The first to march in were the head-dress owners, who hung up their insignia on the back wall; behind them trooped the whole crowd of performers. Two, three, or four old men (their number corresponded with the number of women owning head-dresses) occupied places about the middle of the back wall, dividing the women on one side from the men on the other. Immediately to their left sat the head-dress owners, to their right the leader of the Grass Dance, the proud possessor of a horn bonnet. At the right of the entrance sat the owner of a painted stick decorated with five eagle feathers, a woman who acted as a kind of marshal; and opposite her, to the left of the entrance, were the sword and whip owners, next to them the drummers, and from the drummers around to the leader of the Grass Dance all the other men who were taking part in the performance. One man, however, the owner of the tomahawk pipe, occupied a special place; he sat on the woman's side of the hall, slightly in front of them.

The proceedings opened with four or five Grass Dances. As soon as the drummers began a song the owner of a whip or a sword rose to his feet. This was the signal for the other men to dance; accordingly, they circled around the hall, capering, shouting, crowing like roosters, and exercising their talents in a thousand other ridiculous actions. Thus they continued through four or five dances while the women quietly watched them from their places. The drummers then changed to a Circle song, using in addition to the big drum a number of smaller ones, and changing

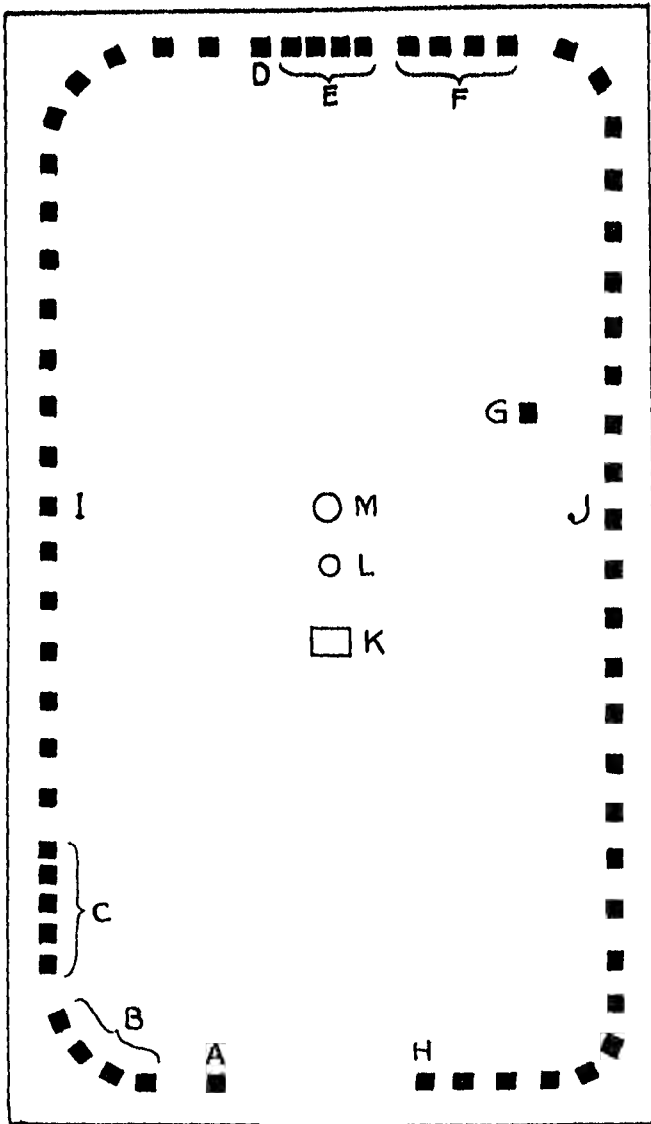


Figure 6. Arrangement at the combined dog feast and Grass Circle Dance about 1913. (A) leader of the dog-feast, (B) whip and sword men, (C) drummers, (D) leader of the Grass Dance, (E) the four old men, (F) the four women with head-dresses, (G) the tomahawk pipe owner, (H) the woman marshal, (I) row of men, (J) row of women, (K) a smudge of sweet-grass, (L) dog skull, (M) pot containing the meat, and later the bones of the dog.

the beat from a sequence of four quavers to an iambic rhythm. At once the head-dress owners lined up near the door, the rest of the women formed a semicircle behind them, and the whole troop shuffled in a clockwise direction around the hall while the men stood up in their places. Alone, in the opposite direction, danced the woman marshal, to strike with her eagle-feather stick any man who was slow in rising to his feet. After the last woman had passed the men fell in behind them and shuffled around also, when any man who saw two of his sisters-in-law, or a sister-in-law and a "comrade's" wife, dancing one behind the other squeezed in between them. A number of beats in quick succession terminated this dance, when the men and women retired to their seats.

Thus the entertainment alternated between four or five Grass Dances and four or five Circle ones. When this began to pall the drummers chanted songs for various individual performances. First danced the leader of the Grass Dance, the owner of the horn bonnet; next the tribal councillors, and after them the members of two very modern clubs, the Tall Hats and the Shells. The Tall Hats were young men who wore on their shoulders badges (made in Calgary) bearing the inscription "Two Hats"; the Shells a group of married men each of whom wore a shell at his throat. A whip or a sword owner then laid down a blanket before the old men at the back of the hall, who moved forward and sat on it. Throughout four successive songs everyone remained still; at the fifth the old men danced four times clockwise around the hall and sat down again. The whip or sword owner again advanced, placed on their heads the women's head-dresses, and handed to one of them the eagle-feather stick, whereupon they repeated their dance, and at its conclusion each in turn narrated his four war deeds, receiving a cheer (shout) and a drum beat for each one.

As soon as the old men returned the head-dresses to their owners another Circle Dance ensued in which the leaders for the first time wore these head-dresses. Then came a series of individual dances, performed successively by the owners of the following articles:¹ big drum; belt; wooden gun; cow-hide shield; whistle; crow-collar; tomahawk-pipe; whips;² swords; horn bonnet.

This series led to another for various war exploits. There was a song for the old men at the back of the hall; for the man who had captured a scalp; for the man who had escaped, after being surrounded by his enemies; for the man who had been wounded in battle; for the man who had stolen a horse; and for the man who had captured a gun. In recent years many of these songs have been omitted because no one present was qualified to dance to them. Finally, the drummers chanted a song for "throwing away a horse," a song that always aroused much expectation in the audience, but no response unless some one present was willing to donate a horse. In that case the donor, after dancing once or twice around the hall, threw a stick outside as far as he could. The crowd of men and women scrambled for it, and the winner redeemed it later for the prize.

¹It is hardly necessary to mention that all these articles were decorated, the majority with eagle plumes, coloured ribbons, strips of fur or beaded skin, and small brass bells. The cow-hide shield bore locks of hair to represent war deeds.

²If two or four whip or sword men were present they danced simultaneously in opposite directions.

In any of these individual performances a kinsman could share the dance of a principal provided he deposited a blanket in the middle of the hall. Some entertainments evoked quite a pile of blankets, which a whip or a sword man distributed to the poorer members of the audience before the final series of Grass and Circle Dances that concluded the festivities.

Various other by-plays enlivened the Grass Circle Dance, so that no two performances were ever exactly alike. Sometimes during an interval between the dances one of the drummers rattled a cluster of bells while his companions pounded the drum and sang a special invitation song. Then some man or other arose and swayed up and down with his knees to the rhythm, looking expectantly across the hall at his sister-in-law or "comrade's" wife. If she was too shy to rise and sway with him he crossed over and slapped her lightly on the back, when etiquette compelled her to join him at the repetition of the song. He generally presented her afterwards with some slight gift as a mark of his esteem, and her husband made an appropriate return.

If no one volunteered to dance when the drummers started up a song they sometimes changed, out of pique, to another that obligated all the men to rise and dance continuously for as often as the song was repeated, since otherwise the drummers would strike and leave the hall. If, however, the drummers were too exacting, and kept on singing when the dancers were exhausted, an old man made them stop by striking their drum with a stick decorated with locks of hair and proclaiming his four war deeds. The same old man, carried away by excitement, sometimes joined in a Grass Dance, brandishing his hair-lock stick in the direction in which he had performed his war deeds. Then at the close of the song he stationed himself in front of the drummers and cried "Listen to me, my children. You saw me pointing my stick over yonder. I shall tell you the story of that deed. Over yonder I captured the scalp which you see represented on this stick. B-- there knows all about it, for he was with me." So he recounted his four war deeds, and received an ovation for each one.

The dropping of a shield or other ceremonial object during a dance evoked a similar by-play. The owner of a whip or a sword picked up the article and deposited it in the centre of the hall. As soon as the dance had ended one of the old warriors held it aloft, and, followed by all the men, danced around four times to the accompaniment of a special song. He then narrated his four war deeds and returned the object to its owner.

Much the same procedure attended the sale of one of the ceremonial articles. Its owner, after instructing the drummers to strike up the "transfer" song, turned to the whip and sword men and named a purchaser, who, though frequently taken unawares, would have been utterly disgraced if he declined. The owner of the ceremonial belt then led the whip and sword men in a dance four times around the hall, and at its conclusion seated the purchaser beside the seller, who changed clothes with him and painted his face, if there was any paint on hand. The drummers then sang the song appropriate to the article, and with the seller leading the two men capered around four times, while kinsmen who wished to

contribute to the purchase price threw each a blanket into the middle and danced behind. After the fourth circuit the two men halted beside the drummers, an old man, standing beside them, narrated his four deeds, and the purchaser whispered to him how many horses he would pay. Seller and purchaser then exchanged seats while the old man publicly announced the price.

The owner of the tomahawk-pipe, who sat in front of the women, played an easy but very important rôle. At intervals between the dances he filled his pipe from a stock of tobacco in front of him and handed it to the nearest of the four old men at the back of the hall, each of whom smoked it in turn. The pipe-man then puffed it himself once or twice and handed it to the last performer. If the drummers also wanted to smoke they sang a special song and the pipe-man refilled his pipe for them. The rest of the people brought their own pipes, but the pipe-man had to supply them with tobacco.

With dances and interludes of one kind or another a Grass Circle Dance lasted from early evening until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, when it terminated with a closing song learned from the Cree. In recent years, however, this song has been generally omitted, and the Indians have drifted away without ceremony whenever they wished.

CHAPTER VIII

RELIGION

In early days the Sarece, like other plains' tribes, were an intensely religious people, although a century and a half of European contact has now modified their old beliefs. Whether they once predicted a dualism in nature, like the Plains' Cree—a good spirit and an evil one, of whom the latter was the more active—we do not know; but after the middle of the nineteenth century they were true monotheists, placing their hope and trust in an all-powerful deity they called the Maker. They conceived of him generally as an old man, but believed that he might assume any shape he wished and could appear and disappear in the twinkling of an eye. His home they placed vaguely in the sky, anywhere between the four quarters of the compass, though they usually thought of him in the east.

To the Maker the Indians directed their morning and evening prayers, and addressed their oaths. "If I lie may the Maker take my children," a man would say, "but if I tell the truth may they live long." Trees around Sarece camps carried offerings to him, pieces of cloth, moccasins, and other objects;¹ for even though nothing but a bad dream had troubled a man, he frequently set out some offering, after praying and singing in the sweat-lodge. Old men commonly ascended a hill-top at sunrise and prayed that the Maker would bless the camp below; and old men and old women gathered around the sick, praying the Maker to heal them. Many a mother carried her child to some old man to gain his prayers; or she begged a grey hair from his head, and, placing it on the head of her child, prayed that the Maker would extend its life until its hair too became grey. On solemn occasions they made a temple of the sweat-lodge, believing that prayers uttered under its roof were more likely of fulfilment than prayers made elsewhere. For special rituals² they varied the shape of the sweat-lodge fireplace and the number of stones to be heated. Even the dirt moved to make room for these stones they did not throw idly outside, but carefully piled at the back of the lodge.

Though the Maker was supreme in the Indians' thoughts, and the object of their constant prayers, they could not disregard all the other forces that seemed to affect their lives for good or ill. Nature to them was not divisible into animate and inanimate; but just as man possessed an incorporeal mind imprisoned in a corporeal body, so did every rock, every tree, and every animal likewise conceal an invisible mind or soul

¹No Indian would touch such an offering, however valuable it might be. The Sarece say that once, during the celebration of a Sun Dance, a woman did carry off a piece of red cloth that had been hung up as an offering to the Maker, and a man followed her example by taking a bow and arrows. But the Maker saw them and said: "I do not approve of human beings carrying away their offerings in this fashion."

²The ritual with the beaver-medicine bundle called for a round fireplace, that with the pipe-medicine bundle a triangular one; and the rituals for painted tents and the Sun Dance a square one. The sweat-lodge ceremony during the Sun Dance required twenty-four stones in the fireplace, on other occasions the Indians used either twelve or eighteen.

within its visible form. And just as in dreams or visions man's soul had power to separate itself from its body and wander abroad, so could the souls of external objects. Man, therefore, was not a special creation largely divorced from the rest of nature, but an integral part of it.

Nature, again, the *Suree* saw, was infinitely varied. From some source or other, perhaps from the Maker, he himself had been gifted with certain powers, the animals, the rocks, and the trees being gifted with others. Through contact with these objects in dreams and visions he believed that he could derive either an increment to his own powers, or protection from some of the ills of life. They could give him prosperity and long life, power to heal sickness, or immunity from death or capture in war. A man who saw in his vision a weasel, an eagle, a buffalo, or a bear was fully assured of his safety in the next war (not, however, in succeeding wars, since this greater immunity would render him too powerful). Consequently, his dreams and visions assumed the utmost significance, even though he realized that many of them were illusory, especially those that came to him in the darkness of night.

Significant visions always conformed to a definite pattern. The "visitor" generally a bird or an animal, appeared to the sleeping Indian either in its own or in human form, conferred on him some blessing, and, in token thereof, showed him some object, outlined its ritual use, and taught him one or more songs that should accompany the ritual. The Indian remembered his vision, and a few months or a few years later he made a similar object which he kept as his "medicine." Not that he believed that any special virtue or power resided in this objective "medicine." That virtue or power lay only in the vision, or rather in the contact he had then gained with what we may call, from lack of a more suitable term, the supernatural world, a world that to the Indian himself seemed only a part of the natural. The medicine-object was only the symbol of this contact, helping him to revive it whenever he sang the proper songs and performed the proper ritual. By itself, therefore, it was valueless. Theoretically he might lose it or sell it, and as long as he retained for himself the songs and the ritual he could make another like it that would answer the same purpose. In actual practice, however, this was not the case. The *Suree* regarded man as but a pawn on the chess-board of life. The powers placed in his hands were very slight; and if through the supernatural world he gained some increment to them, he should accept his blessing with due humility, and refrain from offending his benefactor in word or in deed, lest he lose the increment and meet with disaster. Hence, he should keep his vision more or less secret, not impart it lightly to others as a matter of little account. Any loss of his medicine-object implied the loss also of the favour of his supernatural benefactor; and once he had been deprived of this favour, once he had lost the blessing, it was useless to make a duplicate of the medicine-object that symbolized it. So even when an Indian lost his medicine-object by accident, and did not sell it along with its ritual and songs, he rarely replaced it;¹ and medicine-objects taken from fallen enemies

¹In 1912 an Indian named Crowcollar sold a highly prized medicine-object, the bear-knife bundle, to Dr. Pliny Goddard, of the American Museum of Natural History. Whether he revealed the ritual and the songs to Dr. Goddard at the same time the *Suree* could not say, but in any case Crowcollar took it upon himself to make a duplicate of the bundle. In the eyes of his tribesmen, however, this duplicate possessed no value whatever, they fully believed that he made it merely to sell to some unsuspecting white man.

had no value except as ornaments, not merely because the visions they symbolized were lost and the rituals and songs that went with them unknown, but because they had proved their worthlessness by failing to protect their wearers in battle.

Like other plains' tribes, however, the Sareee could not reconcile themselves to the idea that a power and blessing once conferred on an Indian by the supernatural world inevitably perished with him and could not be preserved for future generations. They subscribed to the doctrine that this power and blessing might persist endlessly provided the original beneficiary's experience could be kept alive and another individual place himself in exactly the same rapport with the supernatural benefactor. The original beneficiary had to transfer his experience to reveal his vision, teach the ritual and the songs, which the recipient then made his own; he sold his experience, that is to say, just as he sold a horse or a dagger. The price he exacted varied in proportion to the accredited value of the experience and blessing. In no case, however, might he give it away for nothing, because that would belittle its value and offend the supernatural benefactor.

Every Sareee youth, therefore, hoped for a vision that would increase his natural powers or grant him some protection during life's journey. He even went out of his way to seek such a vision, by sleeping alone on a hill-top near a thicket, or on the margin of a lake or river. How he distinguished between an ordinary dream that possessed no significance, and a vision of deep religious import, is not quite clear. The vision, of course, had to conform to the general pattern outlined above; but so might an ordinary dream. Possibly the former was more intense than the dream, and left a clearer after-impression. However that may be, most Indians obtained visions at one time or another, and every one without exception possessed some medicine-object or charm, either procured by himself or purchased from another. Each child received one for its protection when it received its name, each hunter carried one to give him success in the chase, and every ailing person sought a new one that would set his feet on the path to recovery.

As we would expect, therefore, these medicine-objects or charms varied greatly in character. Many were not only charms but ornaments: a feather in a man's hair, beads attached to his clothing, or a bracelet of bird's or animal's claws that he wore around his wrist. Naturally, the majority of them interested only their owners and ranked as purely personal possessions. A few, however, which had been handed down for generations, figured in public ceremonies and deeply concerned the whole tribe; they were lodged in private hands, and bought and sold like other goods, although their owners were really only custodians of what was virtually public property. Between these two extremes were other medicine-objects, each the property of some individual, but at the same time held in high esteem by others.

Generally speaking, the older a medicine-object, the greater was the esteem with which the Indians regarded it. An object that had passed from hand to hand through several generations tended to draw to itself other medicine-objects, until it finally evolved into a complex bundle, each

article in which possessed some definite significance. Such bundles were opened on special occasions only, and then only with great ceremony and to the accompaniment of complex rituals. Yet these rituals were not peculiar to the bundles, but attended in greater or less degree every medicine-object that concerned more than a single individual, and were even extended to certain objects, mostly connected with war (e.g., weasel-tail coats, horn bonnets, tents and blankets decorated with war paintings), that were not primarily religious at all, though they gained a tinge of religiosity from the ritualism that enveloped them. For every ceremony connected with any of these objects, the owner painted his face (sometimes also his body) with a special design that differed for each medicine-object; at the opening of the ceremony he prayed over a smudge of sweet-grass or white sage in the centre of his tent, when passing a pipe, dancing, or merely walking around the tent, he moved in the direction the sun travels, i.e., from west through north to east, and from east through south to west, and most of his actions he repeated four times, or rather made three preliminary feints before he actually completed the action. Even his songs he chanted four times, though Sursene songs were wordless, consisting of meaningless syllables only; at least none of the eighty or so songs that were recorded on a phonograph, many of them medicine songs, contained any significant words. Finally, in every ceremony connected with the transfer or sale of a medicine-object, the seller and the purchaser adopted the fiction that they were parent and child, respectively, and the 'child' had to receive the most detailed instruction.

Some concrete examples of visions and of the medicine-objects to which they gave rise will make the subject clearer.

"My uncle sent me out, one mid-winter evening to bring his horses into our camp, which we had pitched beside the Bow River. In passing a grove I noticed a wood-pucker hammering on a tree, and I watched it extract two worms. The bird then put me to sleep and as I lay on the ground it said to me, 'I pity you because you are a very poor youth. One day you shall be rich. I give you this eagle's wing-bone to cure your people's ailments. I give you also this pendant to heal any wounds that you may receive; even though a bullet passes right through your body it will make you well again.' It then taught me two songs, and disappeared. I awoke, rounded up the horses and returned to camp. Some years later I made a replica of the wing-bone (Plate VII c) and used it to heal people. I made, too, a replica of the pendant, which protected me on several occasions when I helped to steal horses from the Sioux."

"Many years ago, when I was a young man, I camped alone in some brush at the bottom of a deep valley just south of the Red Deer River, and climbed a neighbouring hill to see if any enemies were lurking in the vicinity. On top of the hill was a pocket, marking, as I thought, an old tent-site until suddenly a bird settled on it and disappeared. When I walked over to examine it the pocket too disappeared, and in its place wriggled a snake and its young. They fled down a hole, but presently the mother snake issued forth again and began to sing. At the close of her song she said to me 'I have seven children, so I shall give you seven sons. Take care of them for if one dies the others will die too. In years to come make a hat and line it with snake-skin. That shall be your medicine-charm.' It disappeared and I awoke. In after years I made the hat and used it to cure Indians who had become crazy. I placed it on their heads and sang my snake-song. In my lifetime I have had seven sons, four of whom were full-grown when the eldest died. Since then five others have died and now only one remains. I burned the hat when my eldest son died."

"Once when my parents were camped close to a buffalo-pound my mother left her tent to look at a half-skinned buffalo. That night the buffalo changed to a human being, entered her tent and asked her to be his sweetheart. She made a noise that awakened her husband, who roused her and asked her what was the matter

After she had told him her dream and they had settled down to sleep again the tall one appeared to her a second time and said "You have informed on me. Now you shall bear twins three times in succession." Her first twins were a boy and a girl, her second two boys, and her last two girls. She bore no other children."

"When I was about eight years of age, travelling on foot far behind my people, I lay down in the shade of a rock, placed my blanket under my head and fell fast asleep. Presently some one kicked my feet and said to me 'My father invites you to his tent.' Looking up, I found myself inside a strange tent seated beside a strange man whose arm hung loose and unsupported, and whose only garment was a breechcloth. He said

PLATE VII



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"Medicine" objects

to me 'I am the Man Who Does Not Invite Others. This shall be your tent, my son. Look well at it.' Two other men then entered, their bodies were painted white, on their foreheads were arcs of yellow paint, and in their hands they carried drawn bows. The tent-owner grasped an eagle-feather in each hand and held out his blanket as a target, but when they sped their shafts against it the arrows, instead of penetrating, fell to the floor. The archers vanished, and the tent-owner said to me 'That rock where you fell asleep is my tent. I give it to you on one condition that you never eat fish. You will become violently ill if you ever taste fish, and the only thing that will cure you is smoke from a smudge made with the fur of a yellow dog like that one lying near the door. Moreover you must never smoke during the hours of daylight.' I closed my eyes, and when I opened them again I was lying beside the rock.

More than thirty years later I visited some neighbours and was offered something that looked like ordinary pemmican. On tasting it, however, I discovered that the meat was mixed with fish. Almost immediately I began to choke, and only with difficulty made my way home. There my wife made a smudge with the hair of a yellow dog and supported me while I inhaled the smoke. Suddenly I coughed, and a fish about 3 inches long fell from my mouth into the fire. The smudge cured me, but my transgression had destroyed my blessing and medicine-power. Since there was no need afterwards to observe the taboos enjoined on me, I may eat fish freely and smoke by day as well as by night. I may even paint my tent, if I wish, like the tent I saw in my vision, but the blessing that should accompany it is gone and it would be of no value."

"A few years ago, while gathering wood I saw a little hawk chasing something which I think was a ghost. That night I dreamed that I should make a charm of hawk feathers and bells, and either fasten it to my hat or wear it in my hand. It would heal any one who was dying." (Plate VII, b.)

"Once, after it had been raining for several days I saw a badger running along the road towards me and I dismounted from my horse to kill it. The badger, however, disappeared, and that night, as I slept, Thunder told me that I had done right not to kill it, because it was his wife. He directed me to make these two bracelets from the skin and claws of a badger." (Plate VII, c.)

"I bought this whistle and bandolier (Plate VII, d, e) from an old woman named Red-Hat, who derived them from a vision. She daubed my body yellow, painted three black stripes around each wrist and ankle, had the bandolier over my right shoulder and said 'Now you need never fear a gun. If an enemy tries to shoot you he will either miss his aim or his weapon will not go off. Henceforward you must never eat the dried guts of any animal.' Afterwards I slept out on the prairies for three nights, and in a vision on the third night saw some maggots. 'The bandolier has protected me in war, and the whistle I use in doctoring the sick.'"

"Chief Big Belly, when a boy, found a high bank in which there were many snakes, some of which he killed. He climbed on top of the bank to spare another one, but the serpents put him to sleep. In his vision the father snake appeared to him and said 'My son, come over to my tent.' Big Belly then saw a camp of four tents and was invited to enter one on which a snake was painted. Its owner, the father snake, said to him, 'Although you have been killing my children I shall give you these four painted tents and a medicine charm. Kill a hawk, and tie to its feathers some copper and brass arrowheads. Then when any one is ill tie the charm to his hat and do what I do now.' As it spoke it took some charcoal from the fire, chewed it in its mouth and spat it on to its hands, when the charcoal changed to yellow paint. 'If you sell your charm you may make a second one,' it continued, 'but no more. For killing my children you only punishment shall be that you shall die without warning in the prime of life.'"

Through his possession of the snake's charm (Plate VII, e), which he made when he grew up, Big Belly became a very successful medicine-man. He used to paint his patients with charcoal transformed into yellow ochre as the snake had transformed it. But he died suddenly when he was in the prime of life, according to some Indians because he drank too much Florida water. Before he died he sold his snake-painted tent to Many-Horses."

The Sarece, who possessed as scanty a knowledge of herbal remedies as other plains Indians, entertained from early times a profound awe of the Cree, who seemed to know the mysterious virtues of every plant and shrub. When hostilities between the two tribes ceased, and their confinement to neighbouring reserves fostered peaceful intercourse and occasional intermarriage, Cree medicines, especially love and horse medicines, became credited with a wide circulation. The individual Indian, of course, disavowed all knowledge of them, because the Sarece dreaded them exceedingly and looked askance at any one who admitted their use; but nearly every one suspected some neighbour. Typical of many cases, they say, was the experience of Sleigh, an old man still living on

the reserve in 1921. He asked a Cree woman to become his wife without going through the ceremony of marriage before a priest. After they had lived together for a time she became afraid that he would desert her sooner or later, so she mixed a love medicine with some tobacco and gave him a pipeful to smoke. It aroused so mad an infatuation in Slough that he readily consented to a proper wedding before a priest. This allayed her fears of desertion; but his infatuation lasted so long, and he embarrassed her so much by perpetually hovering at her heels, that she finally gave him another smoking mixture as a "sedative."

All or nearly all the love medicines of the Sarcee seem to have been herbal, and none had any repute that did not come from the Cree. No Sarcee ever dreamed that he could ever acquire one through a vision, as he might acquire the power of healing. Similarly horse medicines were nearly always herbs or roots to be rubbed as liniments over the animal's face or body, or mixed with water and poured down its throat, and they, too, came mainly from the Cree. But because the horse belonged to the same realm of nature as the Sarcee's familiar supernatural visitants, the buffalo, the badger, the eagle, and the snake, he conceived that it also might appear to him in a vision, confer on him a horse medicine, and teach him the appropriate songs. This was most likely to happen when an Indian was especially fond of a certain horse, treated it kindly, and never consented to part with it. It might then reveal to him in a vision the herb or root that would give it surpassing speed, or cure the diseases of itself and other horses. His fellow tribesmen might know the plant he used, might even learn his songs, but their knowledge would be valueless to them because they lacked his vision. The profession of a horse medicine-man was, therefore, very profitable once he had established a reputation for himself. Yet he had to be very careful not to offend his benefactor, under penalty of losing his power. He had to reserve for himself alone not only the horse, but the whip and rope he used for it, and he might not use that whip and rope on any other animal.

The Messianic Ghost Dance religion that created so great a turmoil among the Indians of the United States throughout the nineteenth century passed the Sarcee by until the twentieth, when a slight echo of it reached them through the Assiniboine or Stony Indians of Morley. Somewhere around 1910 a native of that place named Cough Child claimed that God had revealed himself to him in a vision, instructed him to sleep for four nights on a certain mountain, and to rub white paint on his cheeks whenever the thunder clapped. Afterwards he should return to his people and restore their pure religion, because Christianity had destroyed all the power with which the Maker had endowed them through prayer and the medicine-pipe. To Cough Child himself God gave the power of healing diseases; the sick man on whom he breathed would rise up well, and the woman in labour on whose womb he breathed would give birth to her child immediately.

After proclaiming his mission Cough Child held a dance, for which he painted a thunderbird on his blanket and covered his body and clothes with white paint. He found several men who would drum for him and sing his songs, and soon gathered large congregations. Gradually his

fame spread far and wide. Cree Indians lying to the northward sent for him to heal them, and from distant Utah a man brought his child so that he might restore its sight. Every patient who was cured received from Cough Child, for a price, a white feather and was told to whiten his cheeks for protection whenever it thundered.

The Sarcee near Calgary were familiar with Cough Child's mission from its inception, yet they placed little credence in it, and the movement soon died out. As late as 1921, however, at least one woman on the reserve publicly wore a white feather.

CHAPTER IX

MEDICINE-BUNDLES

The out-standing charms or medicine-objects among the Sareee were the medicine-bundles, of which mention has been made already. They, too, the Indians say, resulted from visions, but from visions of long ago when man was perhaps in closer touch with nature than he is today. The long passage of years enhanced their reputation and value until at last they ranked among the tribe's most precious possessions, though they continued to rest in individual hands. Ambitious men, indeed, tried to buy as many as possible, not merely to win the favour of the supernatural world, but to increase their prestige and spread their fame throughout their own and surrounding tribes; but so highly priced were the bundles that only exceptionally could a man succeed in owning two at the same time.

On the half dozen bundles in their possession the Sareee prized especially two, the beaver and the medicine-pipe. The latter reflected the Indians' awe and reverence of the thunder; the former was associated not only with the Sun Dance, as already noted (footnote, page 49), but with the cultivation of tobacco, which the Sareee discontinued only when they were confined to their reserve. A second medicine-pipe bundle, held in much less esteem, was purchased from the Cree in the latter half of the nineteenth century; it is now in the National Museum of Canada. The Sareee possessed in addition a bear knife bundle, which was sold to the American Museum of Natural History in 1912, and two black pipe bundles, one of which was destroyed when its owner died, the other sold to the Blackfoot Indians.

There was one other object that we should logically include among the medicine-bundles—viz., the ceremonial head-dress purchased and worn by the woman who gave a Sun Dance. The ritual connected with it, however, has been described in an earlier chapter, so that here we need only insert the legend of its origin.

A man who had gone into the mountains to hunt buffaloes came upon a moose lying with its head toward the south. He was on the point of shooting it when he heard some one singing on the top of a neighbouring peak and, looking up, saw a second moose, husband of the one that was lying down. The male moose put the hunter to sleep. The female then rose, and her husband curled her ardently, but she said to him "You always treat me in this way. I told you that I had no other husband. Look at my head-dress. If I took another husband while I wore this head-dress I should die." When the hunter awakened both animals had vanished. Some years later he made a head-dress corresponding to the one he had seen in his vision and presented it to a woman who was giving a Sun Dance. This is how this head-dress became associated with the Sun Dance, and why the woman who gives the Sun Dance must be pure.

BEAVER BUNDLES

The beaver bundle contained, inside a wrapping of elk hide, a small bag of buffalo scrotum filled with dried saskatoon berries, eight rattles, a digging-stick, one beaver skin, one skin of a white muskrat, and the tail of a buffalo. These, however, were only the most significant articles. It concealed also the stem of a pipe, two buffalo stones, two elk ribs, the skins of a prairie dog and of young deer, antelope, and sheep, several bird skins, and a pair of wristlets made from wildcat claws that the wife of the bundle-owner wore at rituals.

The man who owned the bundle in 1921, Two Guns, explained its origin by the following myth:¹

"A hunter once sighted a herd of buffaloes close to a big lake. He left his horse, concealed himself in a hollow, and, when they drew near, shot one very fat animal. After rolling the carcass on to its back he removed the insides and piled up a portion of the meat, then, rolling the carcass back again, he made another pile of the meat, severed the legs, and knocked off the ribs. While he was thus butchering it a whale (a big fish with a horn on its head) came out of the lake and circled round him, saying 'Do not be afraid of me, my son. You see that little cloud in the sky yonder. Those are the thunderbirds; they are trying to seize me, but they are afraid of human beings and you will protect me.' Then the thunders came down and said 'My son, stand aside. We want to eat that whale. Why did he go to you for protection?' But the hunter answered 'Do not kill him, my father. He came to me for protection. Spare him.' The thunders said again 'My son, he has not as much power as I have.' 'That is not true, my son,' the whale responded. 'We who live on the earth have more power than those in the sky. The thunders come only once a year; they have not the power to stay with you. If you surrender me to them you will sleep over a little water one day, but if you save me I will give you this bundle.' To this the thunders replied 'My son, if you give us this whale, nothing you wish for on this earth will ever escape you.'

The man listened to both, and finally said to the thunders 'I pity the whale, but I wish also have money on you. Spare the whale, and take that fat buffalo instead.' The thunders answered him 'We regret it, my son, but we will spare him.' Moving away a little, they suddenly crashed down and took all the buffalo meat. After they had departed the whale said to the hunter 'Make a bundle like this one,' and it showed him a bag made from the scrotum of a young buffalo. Hereafter, it continued, 'I shall always help you because you have saved my life.' The hunter led the whale back to its home in the lake. It said to him before it plunged in 'Hereafter always throw something into this lake as an offering to me. Now return home and make the bundle, and place inside it a skin of every living creature upon this earth. Place also some tobacco in the bundle, and keep some berries in this little bag as food for me. On the inside of the bag draw my picture, on the outside the thunders. Do not forget my instructions, and never give the bundle away to any other tribe.' The whale then sang the beaver songs for him and went into the water.

Years after the hunter made up the beaver bundle according to the whale's instructions, and at his death bequeathed it to another man. So it has been handed down among the Suroe through the generation.

Every summer before the societies gave their 4-day dances and the whole tribe celebrated its Sun Dance, the owner of the beaver bundle held his own ritual dance. His wife enlisted the aid of relatives to join two tents together and to cook a large quantity of food, which they laid out in the middle of the floor space. The bundle-owner then called in all the people, inviting first the old men, and while he painted the faces of the

¹Another Indian uttered a different myth, which he said the Suroe had learned from the Blood Indian. It closely resembled the myth given by Wissler. *Anth. Papers, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, vol. VIII, 1912, p. 473 (omit note).

men, his wife painted the women, until every Indian bore a red mark across his forehead and another around his lower jaw. The bundle-owner then resumed his place at the back of the tent, with his wife to his right, and, to his left, eight old men to sing and shake his beaver rattles when he opened his bundle. Next to his wife sat a woman to support her in the ritual; and a smudge of sweet-grass burned behind the fire in the centre of the lodge, as in nearly all religious ceremonies.

The old men chanted a song while the owner opened his bundle, and laid all its contents beside him except the two "buffalo" stones,¹ which he deposited near the smudge. One of the old men then offered up a prayer that ended in a universal *az*, and two 'workers' distributed the food. Before eating every Indian uttered a silent prayer on his own account, and threw away a morsel of food and a few drops of liquid as an offering to the Maker. After the meal a man who sat next to the singers filled every one's pipe with tobacco that the host had provided; and the people smoked. The host's own pipe was handed to him by the bowl, so that he took hold of it by the mouthpiece, in the ritual dance for the medicine-pipe the owner of that bundle always grasped his pipe by the bowl.

After every one had smoked the host rose and produced a bag filled with dried saskatoon berries that he had kept in his bundle, and, beginning with the nearest old man, presented each member of the audience with two or three berries; he touched the man's breast with the bag, then circled it around his body to touch his back, and wished him long life and prosperity. On completing the circuit he laid down the bag and threw² his eight rattles to the eight singers, one of whom then chanted a prayer for help in remembering the full series of songs; for the beaver ritual called for eight songs, of which only the first had been sung when the bundle was opened.

The old man now chanted the second song while the owner of the bundle danced around the ring sunwise. At the third song his wife and her assistant danced. The fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh songs were for persons who had vowed to dance with the digging-stick, the beaver skin, the white muskrat skin, and the buffalo tail, respectively. The man who danced with the buffalo tail mimicked the actions of a buffalo and pretended to gore his 'comrade's' wife. For persons who wished to dance with other objects from the bundle the eighth song was chanted and repeated as often as was necessary. Although there was no obligation on any one to rise and dance, individuals often vowed to do so, and always paid a blanket or other object for the privilege, since they hoped by their dancing to receive some blessings from the Maker.

With the chanting of the eighth song the ceremony came to an end. The audience dispersed and the owner rewrapped his beaver bundle and replaced it on the blanket at the back of his tent.

It was not unusual for an Indian to borrow one or more rattles from the beaver bundle when selling a painted tipi, or performing some other ritual. He then approached the owner in the usual way, that is to say, he offered him a pipe filled with tobacco, stated his request, and mentioned the price—usually a horse. After signifying his assent by lighting the

¹These stones, and one of the rattles, are now in the National Museum of Canada.

²The rattles had to be thrown, not handed over, but the writer failed to discover the reason.

pipe the owner opened the bundle and threw the rattle at the petitioner's feet.

The Sarcee no longer hold the beaver bundle in the same esteem as formerly. Neither have they maintained the tobacco-planting ceremony in which it played a part. An old man who had witnessed both the ceremony and the planting of the tobacco thus described them:

Our people joined two tents together in the middle of the camp, and at their centre pegged a buffalo hide over four stakes to make a bag, which they filled with berry soup and stirred from time to time with an elk-bone. The owner of the beaver bundle took his place at the back of the rattles that belonged to the bundle. The remaining Indians crowded round the sides of the tent, or peered in through the door.

Presently three women entered, led by the bundle owner's wife, who had three large blue beads on her neck and broad streaks of red paint across her forehead and round her chin. While the eight old men shook their rattles and sang these women danced toward the berry bag and rubbed their heads against the stakes like buffaloes. At the conclusion of their dance two workers brought food of various kinds into the tent and distributed it among the audience, when those for whom there was no space inside received their portions on the ends of torked sticks that they thrust through the entrance.

Early the next morning the chief called out 'Make haste. Get ready,' whereupon all the Indians turned out to burn the grass from a strip of land about an acre in extent. After extinguishing the fire they swept the field with branches and sprinkled it with white earth to the depth of half an inch. Some one then brought out tobacco seed that had been stripped immediately after the previous harvest, and its husks added to the stalks and leaves for smoking, and a number of women and boys lined up, shoulder to shoulder along one edge of the field, each holding in one hand a sharpened stake, in the other some of this seed mixed with deer manure. At a shout from the chief they marched across the plot turning up the earth and planting a little seed every one or two steps. The boys then raced over the ground to trample in the seeds, while the men set up stakes at the end of each row, and tied to each stake miniature mocassins, travois or bows and arrows for the use of the tobacco people, who resemble human beings. Long ago, our people say, an old man fell asleep on the trail four days after the planting, and in his sleep he heard the conversation of some persons approaching him from behind. One voice said 'My feet are sore, for my mother was not kind to me and did not make me any mocassins.' Another answered 'My mother made me mocassins and gave me also a bow and arrows.' When the old man reported what he had heard the Indians agreed that his visitors were the tobacco people going on a journey; consequently, ever afterwards, they were careful to tie mocassins and other objects to their stakes.

On the same day as the planting, and on the two following days, the Sarcee moved their camp and spent the evenings singing; but on the fourth day they sent back a swift runner to throw something on the plot. Thenceforward until the harvest everyone who had taken part in the planting buried a little food in the ground before each meal to promote the growth of the tobacco.

In the autumn, when the Indians returned from their hunting grounds and approached the tobacco field they sent forward a scout to examine the plot. He reported that all the rows were growing well except 's' and 's', who must have forgotten to feed their plants. The people then held a dance and harvested the crop.

The buffalo stones (*tsa'ram*, 'rock buffalo') in the beaver bundle figured in a special ritual for discovering where herds of buffalo were grazing, but the details are unknown. With no other buffalo stones was there any ritual, not even a smudge; they were treated merely as peculiar stones (or fossils), resembling animate objects, that conferred on their finders good fortune and long life. The Blackfoot Indians, holding that these blessings were transferable, bartered their buffalo stones as they

¹My informant, One Spotted, did not know what it was he threw on the plot.

bartered other medicine-objects; but the Sareee rejected this belief. They did, however, retain the popular superstition that buffalo stones kept for a long time in a bag reproduced off-spring, and there were two or three Indians on the reserve who claimed to have 'parent stones' and 'children' in their possession.

THE MEDICINE-PIPE BUNDLE

The blanket-wrapped medicine-pipe bundle hung every day on a travois behind the tipi, that is to say on its west side, since the entrance always faced the east, beside it was the owner's head-dress within its leather case, suspended from a tripod. Both were taken down at sunset, or when rain threatened, and hung inside the tipi, the bundle directly over its owner's head, the head-dress on top of one of his two back-rests; certain accessories of the bundle, such as the food bowl and the fan used in the sweat-lodge, hung on top of the other back-rest. Since the mouthpiece of the pipe had always to face the north, the two ends of the bundle were distinguished by differently coloured cloths.

PLATE VIII



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Medicine-pipe bundle

The Indian who owned this bundle in 1920, Big Knife, was afraid to tell me what was inside it except that it contained a stone pipe with its stem, a beaver skin, a goat-skin band, and some tobacco; but afterwards a kinsman listed its contents and the objects that went with it as follows:

The blanket in which the bundle was wrapped. This was painted with juniper twigs on the left hand side.

Wrappings inside the blanket, viz., a tanned elk hide, a bear skin, pieces of gaily coloured cloth, and some things.

The carrying-strap, which was really a woman's belt, since it was always a woman who carried the bundle.

A woman's shawl.

A rawhide bag that contained some of the smaller articles listed below.

A decorated pipe-stem.

A small pipe (bowl and stem) used for smoking at ceremonies.

A rattle inside a buffalohide bag.

Whistle or flageolet made from the wing bone of an eagle.

Two tobacco pouches, one of loon's skin, the other from the skin of a deer fetus.

Tobacco, a board for cutting it, and pipe-stokers.

Tongs, a small bag of roots and a small bag of pine-needles for the smudge.

Paint bag, and one or more extra bags containing red paint; paint stick.

The head of a crane.

A mink skin, owl skin, and the skins of some other birds.

Four drums marked with thunderbird claws.

A head-dress of mountain goat's wool, the tripod from which it was suspended out of doors.

An eagle wing feather worn crosswise on the head.

Two necklaces, each bearing a pendant sea-shell worn by the owner of the bundle and his wife.

Four wristlets, each bearing one or more blue beads worn by the owner and his wife.

A white woollen blanket decorated with three circles of beads that was substituted for the original buffalohide.

A food bowl.

An eagle wing used as a fan in the sweat lodge.

A whip.

A harp.

The legend cited by Big Knife to explain the origin of his bundle is as follows:-

Long ago the Santee gathered all their furs and tanned buffalo hides, journeyed to Old Fort Edmonton, and, halting near the fort, sent four or five scouts ahead to inform its factor that their chiefs, councillors and warriors proposed to trade with him. The factor gave the messengers some tobacco in token of his good-will whereupon the whole tribe entered the fort and traded its furs. As the factor was bundling them together to convey to his home far away he asked them whether any of their chiefs would like to go with him. Two warriors volunteered, Spotted Eagle and Crow Flag (or, as he was also called, Cut-Knife). The factor then procured two boats, he himself embarked on the front boat with Spotted Eagle while Crow Flag followed them on the second.

Now the interpreter on the first boat warned Spotted Eagle that the factor's wife was in love with him and that he must carefully avoid paying any attention to her. Crow Flag, however, was not warned, and as they travelled down a big river to a great lake he let his glances rest on her so often that the factor became angry and ordered his men to intercept him on an island. So they beguiled him ashore under pretence of obtaining something and sailed away without him. Spotted Eagle, travelling on the front boat, did not know what had happened to him.

The factor conducted Spotted Eagle to the chief factor and the Big Chief invited both the chief factor and Spotted Eagle to his house. Before they visited it the leader of another Indian party told Spotted Eagle that the Big Chief's house contained many things belonging to Indian societies and that if their owner asked him what he wanted he should request, not the fine things around the walls, but a certain bundle that hung upon the door; even if the Big Chief repeated his

*These and the necklaces on the preceding page, the special insignia of a medicine pipe owner and his wife, were worn in everyday life.

question four times he should give always the same answer. Accordingly, when the Big Chief gave Spotted Eagle some rum and asked what he could do for him Spotted Eagle said that all he wanted was the bundle hanging on the door. The Big Chief told him to choose something more valuable, but the Indian answered 'No. Those other things are too good. You have asked me what I want. Well, all I want is that bundle and nothing else.' Then the Big Chief said 'That bundle belongs to this place and it is very hard for me to part with it. Moreover, it is not worth your trouble in taking it home. Who told you to ask for it?' 'No one told me,' replied Spotted Eagle; 'but I want it for our dances.'

Four days he stayed with the Big White Chief. Each day he received some rum and was asked the same question; and each day he returned the same answer. On the fourth day the Big Chief handed him the bundle wrapped in a flag and he started back with the factor for Old Fort Edmonton.

Meanwhile Crow Flag had been picked up by some white men and taken to a different place. They placed him first among some wild animals, which rushed at him to devour him; but when he said 'I am Crow Flag' the animals lay down. The white men placed him in another house filled with wild animals of a different kind, and there again the animals lay down at his word. They confined him then in a spot where there were wild animals living in wells of water; and they too he subdued at his command. Even a spotted lynx with which they imprisoned him obeyed his word. Finally the white men conducted him back towards Old Fort Edmonton and marooned him again on an island.

One day, as he was walking along the shore, the factor's boat approached and his friend Spotted Eagle caught sight of him. The factor would have left him alone to his fate, but Spotted Eagle said 'He is my friend. Let me join him'; and he jumped overboard as the boat drew near the land. The factor went on his way without them and told their tribesmen that he had left them on an island at their own request. So when they failed to return after many months their people gave them up for dead.

On the island they were starving, for all they could find to eat were a few berries. Crow Flag then said to Spotted Eagle 'Have you ever been granted a vision that gave you medicine power?' 'Yes,' replied Spotted Eagle. 'I am a medicine-man. I can take you home. Cut a hole in my neck and close your eyes.' Crow Flag obeyed. When he opened his eyes again Spotted Eagle had flown with him to another island a little nearer home. Thence they proceeded in the same way to a third island, and a fourth. Finally, they reached the mainland somewhere far off in the north, in the midst of a terrible swamp. Months and months they walked, living on berries and anything else they could find. At last, late in the autumn, they came to their own country again.

One morning the Sarece looked up from their camp, and, seeing two men with a flag on a neighbouring hill-top, sent out a rider to investigate. The rider quickly recognized Spotted Eagle and Crow Flag, and, springing from his horse, kissed them. He then signalled the news by waving his blanket, first to the east, then to the west, and preceded them down the hill to the camp.

That same autumn the Sarece again gathered all their furs and journeyed to Old Fort Edmonton. Crow Flag and Spotted Eagle accompanied them, the latter carrying his bundle on his back. When the scout whom they sent ahead told the factor that these two men were in the party the factor would not believe him, for he was convinced that they had died on the island. When he crossed over on the ferry boat, however, and saw the two men with his own eyes, he was dumbfounded, and his alarm increased when they refused to embark with the rest of the Sarece, but told him to return for them. Spotted Eagle began to sing as soon as he entered the boat, and his song raised a high wind that threatened to upset them. Nevertheless, they reached the shore in safety, and demanded compensation for their injuries from the now thoroughly frightened factor, who hurriedly gave them guns powder, and everything else they asked for from his store. He then took Spotted Eagle's bundle into his house, placed fresh tobacco inside it and covered it with a new red cloth, suffering no harm therefrom because the bundle had been derived from a white man. Thereafter whenever the Sarece carried their medicine-pipe bundle into a fort the factor made it his first care to renew its tobacco and provide it with a new cover."

Big Knife claimed to own the original bundle obtained by Spotted Eagle, who had given it to a brother-in-law, from whom it had passed to various Indians until it reached Wolf Carrier, Big Knife's father. When Wolf Carrier died another Indian took charge of it for a year, but restored it to Big Knife at the close of the term of mourning. At one period the bundle had been sold to a Blackfoot Indian, who dreamed during a dangerous illness that he was to return it to its proper tribe. The Blackfoot, therefore, held a council about it, and subsequently sent it back to the Sareee.

All other medicine-pipe bundles, according to this account, were merely copies of Big Knife's, whether they were owned by Sareee Indians, or by Indians of another tribe; some man would dream about the original bundle, make a copy of it, and purchase the appropriate songs from the owner of the genuine bundle. Whether this be true or not, it is certain that in 1920 the Sareee attached far greater value to Big Knife's bundle than to their second medicine-pipe bundle, which the National Museum of Canada purchased from its owner, Dick Starlight. Thus Starlight often rested his drum carelessly on the ground outside its case, whereas Big Knife's drums were never allowed to touch the ground.

Spotted Eagle, the legend relates further, had two wives and one son, and whenever he was absent with one wife his son and the other wife took charge of his bundle. In consequence, every succeeding owner of the bundle likewise provided a substitute couple for himself and his wife; in lieu of a second wife or adult daughter he selected a kinswoman, and if he had no son he chose the son of some friend.

The wife or woman partner piously followed a fixed procedure when she suspended the bundle each morning outside the tent. With the ceremonial tongs she placed hot coals on the smudge place, threw some juniper leaves on top of them, and, holding over it the mouthpiece end of the bundle, offered up a prayer before she carried it around the south side of the tent to its travois. At night she went through the same ceremony, but carried the bundle around the north side of the tent in order to keep the mouthpiece of the pipe steadily pointed towards the north. The Sareee believed that the Maker's blessing rested on the person performing this ritual. Hence, though it was normally carried out by the bundle-owner's wife or her partner, it frequently happened that some lay individual who was troubled by a bad dream, or for some other reason anticipated misfortune, asked permission to undertake the care of the bundle for one day in the hope that he also might share in the Maker's blessing.

The bundle-owner himself had to submit to many disabilities. Whenever he wished to smoke he had first to blow a whiff toward the resting place of the bundle and point the stem of his pipe in its direction, uttering at the same time a brief prayer. He could use no lariat, whip, or food-bowl except those that belonged to the bundle, and were, therefore, forbidden to other people. When he sat in his tent no one might pass in front of him.¹ Some of the Sareee considered that it was wrong to bring any part of a bear inside his tent, or even to utter there the word for bear; but others rejected this taboo as being applicable only among the Blackfoot

¹This taboo applied to the owner or ex-owner of any medicine-bundle, but was not observed very strictly except in the case of the owner of a medicine-pipe.

Indians, not in their own tribe. Above all he might never wash his own clothes, because that would certainly cause a thunderstorm.¹ On the other hand, the Indians believed that he could stop the rain by facing the west and flinging out the blanket that covered his head as though he were parting the clouds.

On two occasions only did he open his bundle ceremonially, when he transferred it to another Indian and when he held his annual dance. He might open it at other times, without ceremony, to renew the tobacco inside it; yet so great was its sanctity that even then he generally invited some old man to watch him pray over the pipe-stem, refill the tobacco bag, and restore the bundle to its place.

Once in the year, and only once, he held a dance, immediately after the first sound of thunder in the spring. This was an event eagerly awaited by all the Sarcee, who no sooner heard the thunder than they tied pots, pieces of cloth, and other objects to their tents or to trees, and petitioned the Maker for prosperity and long life. The bundle-owner himself hurriedly lit a smudge inside his tent, brought out his four drums painted with the claws of the thunderbird, and rapped one of them four times. Then he called in four old men to beat them and sing the "first thunder" song, raising and lowering the drums four times that the thunder might hear their voices. As soon as the song ended he erected a sweat-lodge, placed his medicine-bundle on top and his offering on a stick behind it, and prayed inside the lodge for help during the coming dance. Then, returning to his tent, he announced the date of the dance and ordered his wife to prepare the necessary food.

If the bundle-owner happened to be away from camp at the first thunderclap his wife called in the four old men, as the thunder ought not to depart without hearing its own song. Their reward was a pipeful of tobacco and some berry soup.²

On the eve of the dance an old man made the round of the camp to exhort the people not to leave. Then, at daybreak, three or four volunteers helped the bundle-owner to join together two large tents, in whose midst the wife placed all the food she had prepared for the feast. The Indians crowded inside, every man and woman adorned with a daub of red paint on each cheek and a streak of red around the lower jaw. At the back of the tent sat the owner, his bundle to the left, his wife to the right. He was crowned with the goat-skin head-dress with its projecting eagle plume; a red buckskin ribbon secured his topknot, blue beads encircled his head and hung down over each cheek, the white shell dangled on his chest, and more blue beads decorated his wrists. To his left lay the bundle, to his right sat his wife, distinguished by her white shell pendant and blue wrist beads. Next to the wife sat the woman partner, unmarked by any special decoration; but the boy partner seated beside the bundle wore the beaded head-band that constituted his special share of it. The drummers, official pipe-filler, and the audience arranged themselves as in the accompanying figure.

¹In 1919, when the Sarcee and Assiniboine Indians were helping the white settlers and the police to fight a prairie fire, some women forced the wife of Big Knife, the medicine-pipe-owner, to walk in the water and to wash her clothes, hoping thereby to cause a thunderstorm.

²In recent times tea has replaced the berry soup.

Naturally the bundle-owner himself opened the ceremony. He lit the smudge and opened his bundle, while the four men bent the drums and chanted the first medicine-pipe song. The official pipe-filler handed the big medicine-pipe filled with tobacco to one of the old men, who pointed it, with a silent prayer, north, east, south, and west, and handed it back to be lit. It was then passed around for general smoking, but scrupulously kept off the ground.

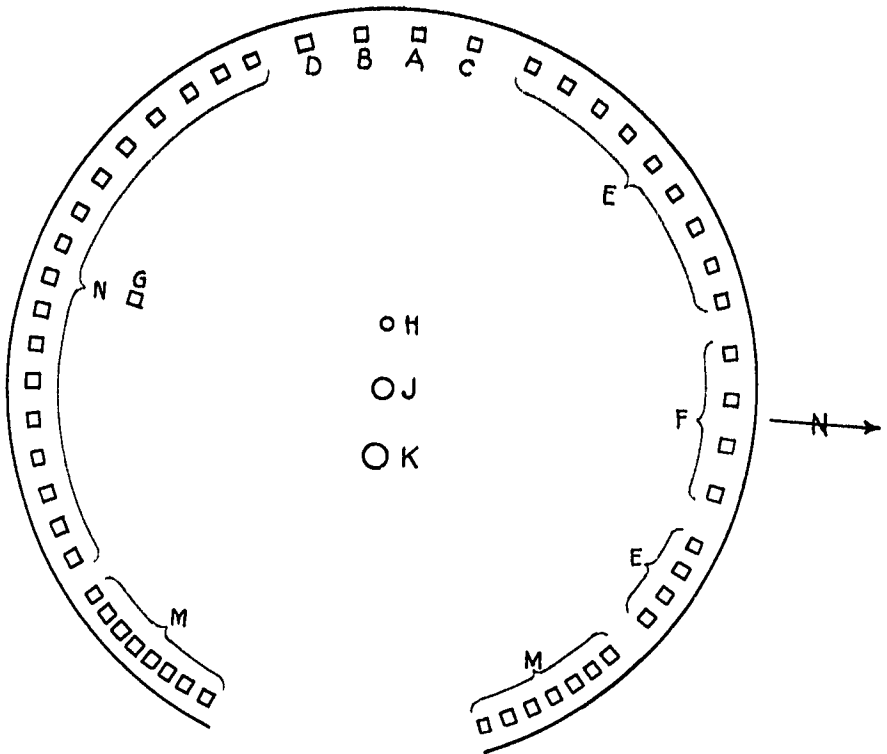


Figure 7. Arrangement at the Medicine-pipe Dance: (A) owner of the medicine-pipe bundle, (B) his wife, (C) the boy partner; (D) the woman partner; (E, E) old men; (F) the four drummers; (G) the official pipe-filler; (H) the smudge; (J) the fireplace; (K) the pile of food; (M, M) women spectators; (N) men spectators.

After all had smoked, two unpaid workers distributed the food, and every person, before eating his portion, prayed in silence. At the end of the meal an old warrior recited from his seat four war deeds, each signalized by the drummers with a simultaneous stroke of the drums.

The drummers now commenced the second medicine-pipe song, in which the bundle-owner joined, shaking his rattle. They repeated it four times, then changed to the third song, which called for a dance by the bundle-owner. Accordingly, he rose to his feet, holding his pipe-stem in his hand, and prayed silently. Then, shaking the stem north, east, south, and west, he danced around the north side of the tent to the east, looked out the door, and continued around the south side to his place.

The boy partner, if present, then danced in the same manner to the same song, but without looking out the door. If he was very young, his father danced in front of him to show him the steps.

To the fourth medicine-pipe song danced the owner's wife and her woman partner. They rose together, and with the wife in front holding the pipe-stem, danced in the same manner as the owner; but whereas the latter had halted every time the song ended, and resumed his dance as soon as the drummers commenced it again, so that it had to be repeated five or six times for his performance, the boy, and after him the women, timed their movements so that they halted three times only, that is to say, on the north, east, and south sides of the tent, respectively. The fourth repetition of the song thus brought them back to their seats.

With the fifth song or songs, for the drummers had several at their disposal, came the lay Indians' opportunity, when all who had vowed to dance with objects from the bundle rose up and performed successively, while the owner rested quietly in his place. The Blackfoot permitted laymen to dance with objects from the bundle at any time of the year, but the Sarece restricted the privilege to the first thunder ceremony, though the dancers often registered their vows months earlier.

The ceremony finally concluded with the chanting of the first thunder song as a "closing" song, and the audience dispersed. Only the bundle-owner, his wife, and the woman and boy partners lingered behind to rewrap the bundle to the accompaniment of a special song.

A medicine-pipe bundle changed hands for one of two reasons. Either some one vowed to purchase it, when the owner could not refuse his assent; or the owner himself grew tired of his possession and foisted it on to some other Indian, for a price.

In the first case the vower filled a pipe with tobacco and, offering it to the owner of the bundle, requested his prayers on the ground that he had vowed to purchase the bundle. Usage obliged the owner to take the pipe and pray, pointing its stem to the four quarters, north, east, south, and west; after which he lit it and smoked. His smoking was the formal sign of his consent.

In the second case the owner invited four old men into his tent one evening and announced to them the name of the man to whom he proposed to transfer his bundle, always taking care to choose some one well able to pay the full price. He then opened his bundle, and the five men slept with its contents spread out beside them. Very early the next morning the owner wakened his companions, and brought into the tent four other men who were familiar with the medicine-pipe songs, and would beat the drums at the critical moment. One old man took up the medicine-pipe stem, a second the owl skin, a third the otter skin, and a fourth the whistle; in that order they marched to the tent of their victim, who was often fast asleep. Slipping the pipe-stem under his blanket they hooted like owls, and the fourth man blew his whistle as a signal for the listening singers to beat their drums. Gathering up the man in his blanket they proceeded to carry him to the bundle-owner's tent, while his wife quietly walked behind. If they had the mis-

fortune to drop him he might walk back to his tent and refuse to go through with the purchase; but once he was deposited in the bundle-owner's tent he had no choice but to submit.

The news spread quickly through the camp, and the Indians prepared for the dance that would see the transfer of the bundle. They joined two tents together to give more space, and the seller's wife gathered a huge quantity of berry soup. At the call of an old man the people assembled inside, and the purchaser sent out a son or relative to bring in his payment, six, eight, or ten horses, and to picket them in front of the tent. The four drummers then started up a song, and the seller, dressed in his special medicine-pipe paraphernalia, danced towards the door and inspected the horses. If he was satisfied, he danced back to his seat; if not, he walked back, and told the buyer what horse or horses he desired from him. The latter could not refuse, and the ceremony was delayed until the buyer received what he wanted.

During a second song the seller transferred his adornments to the buyer and painted his face, while his wife did the same by the buyer's wife. At the proper moment they changed places, and the seller, holding the pipe-stem in his hand, danced around the ring with the buyer following behind him. They halted in four places; at the second halt near the door of the tent the seller blew four times on his hands and passed the pipe-stem to the buyer, who prayed in silence over it before concluding the dance. Meanwhile, any one who wished to contribute towards the purchase price threw his contribution (usually clothes) on the floor of the tent and danced behind them. The two women followed with a similar dance, after which the buyer's relatives deposited a number of presents on the floor, most of which the seller kept for his own family. The audience then dispersed, and the double tent was transformed again into a single. Throughout the rest of the day, however, the buyer and his wife received instruction from the sellers in the daily ritual of life. Like a child who knew nothing, the buyer had to be shown how to put on his moccasins, to light his pipe, and a thousand other details. He was forbidden to wash himself, or to scratch his body with anything but a special stick. For every item of instruction, repeated four times, he paid; and throughout the performance the seller chanted and kept the smudge constantly burning.

At evening other men gathered in the seller's tent, and while four of them beat the drums and chanted, the buyer practised the ritual medicine-pipe songs. At the commencement of each song some one walked over to the bundle, received from the seller some object, and, after praying over it, danced around the tent sunwise and handed it back. Thus they continued until some one had danced with every object in the bundle, when the seller closed the proceedings by lighting the medicine-pipe itself and passing it around. Between dances, however, this pipe was not used, but a volunteer filled for the audience another large pipe that every bundle-owner kept in his tent for non-ritual use. Whatever pipe was used it had to circulate, as always, in a sunwise direction around the north of the tent to the east, then around the south again to its owner.

The transfer occupied four days and four nights. Each day the buyer received instruction from the seller, each evening he learned the ritual of the bundle, and each night he and his wife slept in the seller's tent. On the afternoon of the fourth day the seller placed the bundle on top of a sweat-lodge built by some volunteers, and the two men went inside with their wives and rubbed themselves with sage. As soon as they came out and sat down a number of old men took their places within, sang a special medicine-pipe song and prayed aloud in turn. Then the buyer removed the bundle and exchanged tents with the seller, so that the bundle might remain in the same home.

If the seller of a medicine-pipe was comparatively young he often hired an old man to carry out the transfer in order to enhance the dignity of the proceedings. The two men then sat at the back of the tent with the bundle between them, and the actual seller took no part in the proceedings beyond prompting the old man what horses to demand.

After a man had purchased a medicine-pipe bundle he was forbidden to visit the tent of any other Indian until he had received a formal invitation and been presented on his entrance with a horse, for which he later paid in kind. After thus formally visiting one tent, however, he was free to enter others as he wished.

The ceremonies just described relate especially to the main medicine-pipe bundle owned by the Sareee, the one which they claim served as the model of all others. Very much the same ceremonies, however, attended the second medicine-pipe bundle which the Sareee sold to the National Museum of Canada in 1920. Under an old torn blanket wrapping this bundle has two others, one a red blanket, the other a blue; and inside, braced by two sticks, are the following objects:

- Medicine-pipe stem wrapped in a red blanket.
- A beaded leather attached to a stick.
- 3 single feathers.
- 2 bunches of feathers, one of them thrust into a weasel skin
- 2 skins of small animals.
- A whistle with pendant feather and strings.
- Tobacco leaf.
- A bird skin.

In a separate bag are:

- The pipe-bowl with its 3 prickers.
- 2 beaded pouches containing tobacco.
- Beaded necklet and wristlets.
- Rattle.
- Beaded belt.
- White shell sewn to a piece of skin, inside a small bag.

Other objects accompanying this bundle are:

- A tripod with 4 legs for suspending the head-dress.
- 2 sets of fire-tongs, one for ritual, one for everyday use.
- 1 drum inside a cover.
- 1 food bowl.
- 2 fans for the sweat-bath.
- 1 everyday pipe.
- 1 board for cutting tobacco.
- 1 saddle.
- 2 bags containing red ochre.

BLACK PIPE BUNDLES

The daily ritual governing the black pipe bundle (as stated already, the Sareee formerly possessed two of them) closely paralleled the ritual governing the medicine-pipe, for, like the latter, it was carried outside each morning, wrapped in a blanket, and suspended above the door of its owner's tent, then at evening carried inside again and hung above his sleeping place. The Indians seemed to remember very little else about it except that it was used only for war.¹ The warrior who wished to gain its protection borrowed it temporarily from the owner, offering him a pipe filled with tobacco and a blanket. The owner smoked the pipe, painted the borrower's face, and tied to his hair a buffalo stone that went with the bundle, after first praying over it at the sweet-grass smudge. On returning from his expedition the warrior restored both bundle and buffalo stone to their owner.

According to tradition, one of the two black pipe bundles originated from a woman's dream. When her husband died, and the other Indians in consequence moved their tents, she remained behind and slept beside her husband's corpse. Many ghosts then visited her, and, showing her a black pipe wrapped in a blanket, bade her rejoin her people and make a bundle like it.

BEAR-KNIFE BUNDLE

The Sareee have possessed more than one bear-knife medicine-bundle in the course of their history, but their last one they sold to the American Museum of Natural History about 1912. In all of them the principal object was a knife, from whose handle generally dangled two bear's teeth. It was legitimate to open the bag containing this knife and its accessories at any time of the year, but in actual practice it was very seldom opened except when its owner was going on the war-path. He then painted a red line across his forehead, a vertical black line down each side of his face over the eye and corner of the mouth, and red lines across each wrist and hand. Thus adorned he called into his tent all the more important old men, and all who had helped him to purchase the bundle, kindled a smudge, and solemnly unwrapped the knife to the accompaniment of a special song. Then, holding the weapon in his hands, he prayed that he and his companions on the war-path might meet with good fortune.

As in the case of other bundles, the man who wished to purchase a bear-knife bundle offered its owner a pipe filled with tobacco and stated his wish. At the transfer itself the seller painted his face as above and seated himself at the back of his tent; the buyer, stripped to his breech-clout, sat near the door. After unwrapping the knife the seller painted it with red ochre. Both men then dropped to their knees and held out their arms; the seller, chanting his bear song, and poising the knife between his right thumb and forefinger, pointed it three times at the buyer, and the fourth time threw it. If it dropped from the buyer's fingers the transaction was void; if he caught it he hugged it to his breast and prayed over it. The seller then handed over the rest of the paraphernalia and

¹The Piegans owned a medicine pipe, used mainly for war, which they claimed to have obtained from the Sareee. See Wissler, *C: Anth. Papers. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, vol. VII, 1912, p. 161.

the ceremony ended. A day or two later the buyer paid the purchase price, a horse, a gun, or some clothes. The Sareee never used a sweat-bath at the transfer of a bear-knife bundle, nor did they ever roll the purchaser on a bed of thorns, as was the custom among the Blackfoot.

Crow-Collar, who sold the last Sareee bear-knife bundle to the American Museum of Natural History, received it from his father Feather Head; and Feather Head, according to the tradition, made it himself in consequence of a dream. In this dream he saw a bear which handed him a similar bundle, saying 'My son, just as I never turn aside when I pursue some object, so when you give this bundle to any one don't let him turn away. Throw the knife straight at the man's chest. If he catches it in both hands, good; but if it cuts his hands or his chest he will die soon afterwards.'

CHAPTER X OTHER MEDICINE-OBJECTS

PAINTED TENTS

Of equal value with the lesser medicine-bundles, and surpassed only by the beaver and medicine-pipe, were the painted tents, of which the Sarcee claimed at least a dozen. Like the bundles, they originated from visions, could be replaced when worn out, bought, and sold, but never duplicated. Their first owners were always medicine-men who professed to have received from their visions the power to cure diseases, and to have been granted the right to paint certain patterns on their tents after they had practised successfully and established their reputations. Indians who were not medicine-men obtained their painted tents only by purchase.

In 1921 the Sarcee possessed four painted tents, and claimed the right to paint seven others. One, the Eagle, they had sold a few years before to the Cree, and another, the Skunk, had lapsed with the death of its owner; but between 1921 and 1929 they acquired from some source a new tent, the Buffalo (Plate I, frontispiece). The four painted tents they erected and occupied in 1921 were:

- Bee (Plate IV, page 21).
- Wolf (Plate IV, page 21)
- Big Stripe
- Fish

The seven that they claimed the right to paint were:

- Snake
- Otter
- Big Rock
- Buffalo Head
- All Black
- Owl
- Otter Flag

Every owner of a painted tent had to keep a large stone pipe and a board for cutting tobacco, because, being a man of note in his community, he was expected to invite his tribesmen to smoke in his lodge at irregular intervals. This pipe and cutting board he sold with the tent, along with his four medicine-songs, his ceremonial pair of fire-tongs, and, if he possessed them, a drum and the right to paint the face with some peculiar pattern. The medicine-man who first acquired a painted tent, however, could not sell with it his powers of healing, because these powers had been granted for his sole use and perished with him. With most tents went some special custom or taboo: in some, for example, it was customary to set up altars of painted earth whenever they were sold. The owner of the Otter Flag tent claimed the curious privilege of pounding his drum four times when he wished to invite his neighbours to eat or smoke with him; and whenever he lit his pipe, he shook the pole that

held up his "Otter Flag," thereby tinkling the elk toes or metal bells suspended at its peak.

At the present time painted tents (and even medicine-bundles) change hands during the ordinary Sioux-Circle dances, sometimes without previous notice, the owner merely announcing that he intends to transfer his tent to some designated person. The purchaser then fixes the payment, and the owner, however small the price he receives, cannot back out of the arrangement. In former times painted tents changed hands only on request, and their owners practically fixed the purchase price. Every bargain was struck in the usual manner; the man who desired the tent filled a pipe with tobacco, visited the owner, and handed him the pipe, at the same time stating his wish. The owner, if willing, lit the pipe and smoked; if unwilling (as he might be for two reasons, first, because the price offered to him was too low, and, second, because he believed his ownership was bringing him good luck), he simply refused to take the pipe into his hands.

Let us suppose that the owner agreed to sell his tent. On the appointed day he moved all his property into another lodge so that the purchaser might move in, and while his wife cooked berry soup, he himself took out his ceremonial fire-tongs and prepared a smudge. Towards evening he called in all the old men and any of the younger men who owned painted tents, distributed his food, and waited while they ate and smoked. He then opened the proceedings by adorning the purchaser and the purchaser's wife with his special face pattern, if he had any. After this he took up his fire-tongs, and, with the usual three feints, laid it in the purchaser's hand; then, resting his own hand over the purchaser's, he helped him to place on the smudge a live coal, and juniper or sweet pine on top. The purchaser's wife might participate in this ceremony by holding her husband's arm; should she prefer it, however, the seller guided her through the same movements afterwards.

With the lighting of the smudge the second stage in the ceremony opened. The seller brought out his drum (if he had one; if not, a rattle borrowed from the beaver medicine-bundle) and sang his four songs, in which the audience joined. The audience always knew the songs if the painted tent was an old one; but if it were new, and the songs unfamiliar, the company had to rehearse them again and again, because they would chant the same songs at every future sale. Each owner of a painted tent (beginning with the man on the seller's left) then took the drum and led the audience in the songs that belonged to his tent—all four of his songs if the company was small, but one or two only if many men were to succeed him. The audience dispersed at the close of the singing, but reunited the next three evenings to repeat the performance. On the fourth day, too, the seller's wife taught the wife of the purchaser how to lace up the door of the tent, not because it differed in any way from other tents, but merely as part of the ceremony and to extract a little extra payment.

The visions that gave rise to painted tents soon passed out of memory, because there was no reason to recall them when the medicine-powers credited to go with them lapsed. In character they did not differ from other visions, as the two following examples show:

Origin of the Owl Tent

"Once when I was a young man, travelling alone to another camp, I saw an owl sitting on its nest; and I shot one of the young birds with my arrow. The mother bird disappeared over a hill, but presently returned with a hawk, which flew down to the edge of the creek near the wounded bird and struck its side with its wings. Moving over, it struck its other side, whereupon the young owl stretched out both its wings, headed. A third time the hawk struck it, on the head; and a fourth, on the tail. Then both birds flew away and settled beside the mother owl. Immediately I found myself inside a painted tent like the one I now occupy, with the mother owl sitting beside me. She said to me 'If you had killed my child you yourself would have died; but now that my child is healed I give you the privilege of erecting a tent like this one.' Many years after the vision I painted this tent" (Old Severn).

Origin of the Bee Tent

"More than fifty years ago, when buffalo were still plentiful on the plains, we pitched our camp a little south of where the Bow and Red Deer rivers join and I rode away to visit some neighbours. Suddenly I passed a nest of bees, that knocked

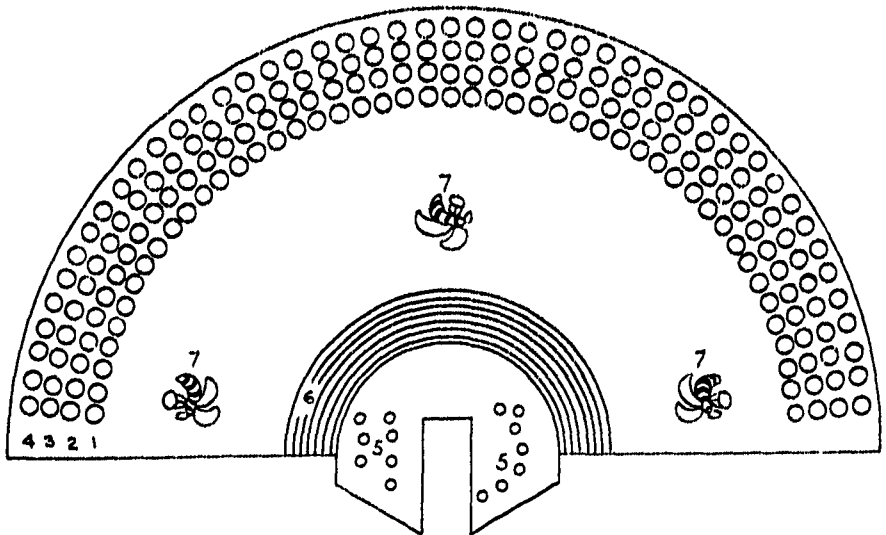


Figure 8. Sketch plan of the designs on the bee tent. The ground of the tent was painted yellow. The bees were represented realistically in green on the tent wall (7), and again by green circular spots on the two ears (5). The beehive was given the form of eight arcs (6), painted, respectively, red, yellow, black, yellow, green, yellow, heliotrope, yellow; they formed eight circles near the top of the erected tent, which was painted black above them. The honeycomb appeared as four rows of circular spots (1, 2, 3, 4), painted, respectively, heliotrope, green, black, and red, all around the bottom of the tent.

me to the ground senseless. The father of the bees then came to me and said 'My son, come and visit my tent.' I entered and sat down beside him; he looked exactly like an old man, and his wife like an old woman. He said to me 'My son, I give you this tent of mine; but you must never eat the intestine of any animal.' He then sang for me four songs, and his wife sang a fifth. The tent disappeared. I came to my senses and found myself lying on the ground under the stars. Now [in 1921] for the first time I am painting the tent which the bees gave me; for though a man receives a vision in his youth, he may not paint his tent until he is well on in years" (Many Wounds).

Many Wounds might never have painted his Bee Tent at all if another Indian named Crowchild, who owned a new white canvas tent, had not asked him to decorate it with his vision, for a stated price. The old man agreed and enlisted his sons and nephews to carry out the work. On the evening before the appointed day he visited Crowchild and his wife to teach them the medicine-songs that went with the vision. At daybreak the two men and their relatives mixed the paints inside—green, heliotrope, yellow, black, and red, all except the last, which was native red ochre, purchased from a store in Calgary; then, with the help of a ladder, they took down the tent and laid it flat on the ground. Many Wounds himself marked out the patterns, using a stick for drawing straight lines, and a wooden hoop for stamping the circles; one large semicircle, which appeared on the erected tent as a full circle near the peak, he traced with the help of a cord. His relatives then filled in the patterns with brushes and rags, and after they had finished he drew in three bees, one on each side of the doorway and one at the back. While the paint was still wet Crowchild and his wife re-erected the tent and moved their property inside again. (See Plate IV C, page 21, and Figure 8, page 93.)

SHIELDS

Every shield possessed religious significance, because no warrior might make or carry one unless he had obtained the right from a vision, or by purchase from a man who himself had obtained it in a vision. Should the vision be revealed the shield lost its virtue and would no longer protect its bearer; hence shields captured in battle were valuable only as trophies. It was not uncommon for a young warrior to vow that he would purchase some old man's shield if he returned safely from a raid.

Since the shield was a religious object, its sale or transfer naturally called for a strict ritual. The seller sat, as usual, at the back of his tent with the purchaser to his right and, to his left, four men holding drums. Between him and the fireplace was a smudge of sweet-grass, and in front of the smudge an altar of white clay. The ceremony went through four stages, each accompanied by its special song.

- (1) The seller daubed the purchaser's face with yellow paint, drew a shield in black on his forehead and a new moon in dark red on his right cheek.
- (2) The seller placed a knife in the purchaser's hand and guided it while it traced out on the clay altar an image corresponding to the name of the shield—if the buffalo shield, an image of a buffalo's head with the nostrils marked out with red ochre. He then placed the shield in the hands of the purchaser, who held it four times over the smudge before removing its case and resting it, bent inside out, on the ground to his right.
- (3) The seller held the purchaser's foot over the smudge four times and pointed it towards the shield, whereupon the purchaser rose and leaped into the shield, causing it to spring back into shape. Tradition averred that unless he landed on it properly with both feet he would die soon afterwards. He then danced around the circle and sat down.
- (4) The purchaser rose, took up a pot of red paint mixed with water, symbolizing the blood of the buffalo or other animal that first gave the shield, and began to drink. Some relative threw down a blanket, took the pot away from him and drank also. Others then followed until all the paint was consumed. Finally the purchaser stepped into the thong of the shield, suspended it over his shoulder, and carried it home.

Origin of the Buffalo Shield

A hunter once sighted three buffaloes, a cow leading its calf and the bull following behind. The cow saw him and told the bull, which answered "Don't be afraid, for he will not hurt us. I am going to give him something." Turning to the man, it said "Rise, my son, and don't shoot at us. I will give you my shield, which will enable you to become a great chief and capture many trophies from your enemies." It bade him drink red paint as if it were buffalo's blood, but never to eat the brain of a buffalo. Even though his enemies shot at him as they shot at buffalo, his shield would protect him. That is how mankind obtained the buffalo shield. Other shields came from other animals.

HORN BONNETS

In addition to the shield several other articles worn by warriors were attributed to visions and invested with religious sanctity. One was a bonnet with two upstanding buffalo horns, worn only on the war-path or during the Sun Dance when its owner narrated his four brave deeds, and forbidden on all other occasions. As with the shield, the ritual governing its use was conducted in four stages, each accompanied by its special song.

To officiate at the ceremony the seller generally engaged an old man who him-self had at one time owned a horn bonnet. This old man invited the Indians into the seller's tent and seated the purchaser at the back of the lodge immediately to his right, while four men carrying rattles from the beaver bundle took their places to his left. Between them and the central fireplace was a smudge, beside which lay some white sage covering a lump of buffalo manure; and in front of the smudge was a square altar of white clay. On two opposing sides of the altar the old man outlined with yellow clay the Pleiades and the Dipper, and on the two remaining sides a new moon and the head of a buffalo. He then commenced the ceremony proper.

- (1) He daubed the purchaser's face with yellow ochre, and encircled the eyes and mouth with streaks of red.
- (2) Placing one of the purchaser's moccasins in his hand, he made him break up the patterns on the altar.
- (3) After three feints he placed the horn bonnet on the altar, then took up the white sage and laid it at four places around the tent.
- (4) The purchaser danced on each of the four bundles of white sage, therewith bringing the ceremony to a close.

SCALP-LOCK SHIRTS

Certain warriors wore shirts decorated with scalp-locks, a garment that the Indians explain by the same legend that they cite for sweat-lodges and the institution of the Sun Dance.¹ A man who captured a scalp in battle frequently handed it over to an old warrior and offered to pay him two or three horses if he would make him a scalp-lock shirt. The old man then killed a deer, and while his wife was tanning the hide, he himself intercepted the women at the watering-hole and cut from each of them a lock, saying "Do not refuse me, for this is holy." His wife added the locks he thus obtained to the original scalp-lock, and sewed them on the shirt she made from the deerskin.

¹ See p. 47.

The sale of a scalp-lock shirt passed through four stages, as in the sale of a horn bonnet. The principals arranged themselves in the same manner, and there was the same altar of white clay, which on this occasion carried the outline of a new moon, in red paint, flanked by the Pleiades and Dipper in yellow.

- (1) The seller (or an old man acting for him) covered the purchaser's face with red paint, then encircled it with a ring of black paint and drew a streak of black down the nose.
- (2) The seller removed one lock from the shirt and showed the purchaser how to tie it on again. He next laid an awl in the purchaser's hand and made him punch a hole in the shirt; then, handing him the lock of hair, he bade him thread it through the hole. The purchaser made the usual three feints before attempting to thread it; if he succeeded at the first attempt he gained the blessing of living to old age. The seller received extra payment for his instruction.
- (3) The seller held the shirt over the smudge and touched it against the purchaser's shoulder; held it three times again over the smudge and touched successively his back, his other shoulder, and his breast. The purchaser now donned the shirt, and with the feather of a black-tailed hawk that the seller handed him destroyed the altar, praying "May I have long life and many horses." He then planted the feather in his hair.
- (4) The seller placed four bunches of white sage in a line leading to the door, and the seller danced on each in turn. This ended the ceremony.

DOG-SKIN BANDOLIER

This was another 'medicine charm' used only in war. It consisted of a dog skin split down the centre, and slung as a bandolier in such a way that the head of the dog rested on the wearer's shoulder and the feet and tail trailed at the knee. From the bottom hung little bells, bought from the Hudson's Bay Company, that tinkled with every movement. In camp the owner suspended the bandolier inside his tent, but on the war-path he hung it to a tree near his head so that the head of the dog might point towards the enemy and growl if misfortune threatened him. He might not flee in battle, however perilous his plight, unless a comrade whipped him, when his charm would protect him from all bullets.

The Sarece never possessed more than one or two dog-skin bandoliers at one time and, therefore, prized them very highly. The ritual for its sale followed the usual pattern, but the details were not recorded.

WEASEL-TAIL SHIRTS

Another war garment, commonly worn also at ceremonies, was a shirt (with or without leggings) that was decorated with weasel tails. It was on a garment of this kind only that a Sarece might paint his war deeds, or hire an old man to paint them for him. Yet no man might make such a shirt because of his valour in war, or in virtue of a vision; he could procure it solely by purchase. Its transfer demanded a ritual similar to that attending the transfer of a horn bonnet or a scalp-lock shirt, although today, when the old customs and beliefs are declining, a weasel-tail shirt may change hands without ceremony.

The seller arranged the usual smudge behind his fire, behind the smudge an altar of white clay and a heap of white sage. Between the altar and his sleeping place he spread out the shirt on a blanket that the purchaser

supplied. The purchaser sat on his right, four singers with drums, or with rattles borrowed from the beaver bundle, on his left. The seller then painted the purchaser. He drew two red lines, one right across both eyes and the other across the mouth, or, in some cases, one outward from the corner of the right eye and the other outward from the left corner of the mouth. He next daubed yellow ochre over the rest of his face, and over his whole body above the waist; and he daubed his legs yellow also, if there were leggings accompanying the shirt. Finally, down each arm, and down the legs if they had been daubed yellow, he painted in red a double track of broken lines intended to represent the tracks of a weasel; for in all ceremonies connected with the weasel its tracks had to be painted on the body or on a blanket, or else marked out on an altar in coloured earth.

The ceremony proper, in four stages, each with its appropriate song, followed the painting.

- (1) The seller tied the tail feather of an eagle to the crown of the purchaser's head.
- (2) The seller drew the weasel-tail shirt over the purchaser's head, and the leggings, if there were any, over his legs. The blanket on which they had rested he stowed away among his own possessions at the back of the tent, and presented the purchaser with an equivalent blanket.
- (3) The seller placed in the purchaser's hand the beaded moccasins that always accompanied a weasel-tail shirt, and guided them in levelling out the pile of white clay. The purchaser then dropped the moccasins, and, guided again by the seller, pressed his forefinger into the clay, making a hole that symbolized a weasel's burrow. Next he made the 'weasel's tracks' around the margin by pressing in the clay with his first and middle fingers. Finally, still guided by the seller, he dropped a little yellow paint into each mark, thus completing his altar.
- (4) With the seller leading, both men danced sunwise around the tent shouting. The singers chanted then song four times, and at the close of the fourth rendition the dancers sat down again. This ended the ceremony proper, but before the purchaser might leave the seller had to drop bunches of white sage across the north side of the tent and for some distance outside it, so that his feet might not touch the bare ground.

THE GHOST DANCE

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, perhaps even earlier, there arose among the Sarece a peculiar dance known as the Ghost Dance, which apparently had no connection with the Messianic phenomenon of the same name that spread so widely throughout the United States. The Sarece themselves relate the following legend to explain its origin:

One winter when the Sarece were living in two camps not far apart a young man from one camp went over to visit some people in the other. During his absence a girl in his own camp died. Her people buried her in a tree and moved away, leaving behind only one small tent in which the dogs had sheltered. After they had gone the youth returned, carried a load of wood into this tent, lit a fire, and sat down at the back to remove his leggings and moccasins, which were wet from the journey; and as he removed them one by one he threw them towards the door, exclaiming "Dry that," just as though he were married and his wife were sitting there. Hardly had he thrown his last legging when a young girl entered the tent and said "Why, certainly, I will dry them for you"; and she squeezed them out and hung them up to dry. The youth was frightened but she said to him "Why are you afraid? You said 'Dry that,' and I come to dry it for you. Don't be afraid. I shall be your wife." She remained and became his wife.

The next morning they took down their tent and followed his kinsmen's trail to their camp. For a time they lived happily, and she bore him a son. Of one thing she warned him, that, however angry he might be with her, he should never wish that she were a ghost.

One day he killed a buffalo, and carried some of the meat to his tent, where he invited some of his kinsmen to eat with him. The tent became filled with smoke, and he sent his wife out to adjust its ears; but in spite of her efforts the smoke persisted. In his anger he called out "I wish you were a ghost"; then, recollecting her warning, he added "I am sorry I said that." After a time his wife re-entered, put on her blanket, and said to him "Take care not to go to sleep to-night." Soon afterwards she went to bed with her child, while her husband sat up and watched. He became sleepy towards morning and thought that he would lie down and rest without closing his eyes; but as he rested he fell asleep. Suddenly he awoke, stirred up the fire, and drew the blanket from his wife and child. Nothing remained of them except dry bones. For hours he wept bitterly, but finally he wrapped the bones neatly in the blanket and deposited them in a tree.

With the coming of summer he started out on a long journey, and after travelling for many days sighted on top of a hill some ragged tents, the tents of the shades. A man's shrute approached him and said "Human being, our chief invites you to his tent." Following his guide he entered the chief's tent, to which flocked all the other shades in the camp. The chief said to him "You are looking for your wife. She passed here three days ago." They gave him water in a hollow vessel made from the backbone of a buffalo, which he thought he could drain without difficulty; but however much he drank, always a little remained in the vessel. They gave him a little pemmican in a similar dish, and that too he was unable to finish. After he had eaten and drunk he continued his journey.

Now he came to another camp, where he received the same reception, and learned that his wife had passed there two days before. He travelled on to a third; his wife had passed that one only one day before. Then he reached the fourth camp. A shade came out to meet him and conduct him to the tent of his father-in-law, who said to him "Your wife is here."

In the country of the shades day was night and night day. His father-in-law called in all the shades, and, after passing around a lighted pipe, bade them stand while he chanted the "ghost" song. As he chanted he danced four times around the ring moving his left arm as though working a pump-handle, and at the end of the song resumed his seat. When the shades sat down after him the young man noticed that the crowns of their heads had become like those of human beings. After his father-in-law had danced a second time they became human from the waists upward; after he had danced a third time, holding in his hand a forked stick decorated with two eagle plumes, they became almost completely human; and after he had danced for the fourth time, they changed entirely to human beings, joined in his song, and at its close left the tent.

All through the performance the young man had searched their faces for his wife, but it was not until they had gone that he found her, lying at the side of a tent wrapped in a robe. His father-in-law said to her "Rise, my daughter, your husband has come for you." Her little child rose with her, and, recognizing its father, ran over to him. Thus the man regained his wife. From him first the Indians learned the Ghost Dance and song.

The function of this Ghost Dance was the healing of sickness, yet it was the property of an individual and could be bought and sold like any tangible medicine-object. Its owner, when summoned to the aid of a sick man, painted his face and body with yellow ochre or white clay, according to his fancy, prayed over the patient, and sang a special song, while the audience remained silently kneeling. He then intoned the ghost song proper, whereupon the audience rose and joined in, holding blankets over the right arms and 'pumping' with the left. It then repeated the song while the owner and the patient hopped around the ring, the former leading. Later he received a substantial payment for his services.

